PRIVATE WORTH

THE

BASIS OF PUBLIC DECENCY.

AN

ADDRESS

TO

PEOPLE OF RANK AND FORTUNE.

DEDICATED TO

THE BISHOP OF LONDON.

BY

A MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT.

If virtue and religion were eſtabliſhed as the neceſſary titles to reputation and preferment; and if vice and infidelity were not only loaden with infamy, but made the infallible ruin of all mens pretenſions, our duty, by becoming our intereſt, would take root in our natures, and mix with the very genius of our people. SWIFT.

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TO THE RIGHT REVEREND FATHER IN GOD,

B E I L B Y,

LORD BISHOP OF LONDON.

THE higheſt reſponſibility is annexed to all thoſe powers, natural, ſacred, and civil, with which God and ſociety have inveſted your Lordſhip. Your's, my Lord, is their dignity; their utility belongs to the public: and there never was a time in which their beſt exertions were more neceſſary than now. Your Lordſhip's acceſſion to the See of London was the more generally ſatisfactory from the expectations raiſed by the application of them under a direction thus virtuous and reſpectable. The following Addreſs, which aims at a ſimilar tendency, has therefore a juſt claim on your Lordſhip's patronage.

During the late melancholy interregnum, the apprehenſions of the wiſe, the ſerious, and the thinking part of mankind, were much

alarmed by that ferocity which diſtinguiſhed the conflict of the two great parties who divide the country. It can matter very little to a large majority, whoſe induſtry has rendered them independent, what motives impel the votaries of ambition in thwarting each other. The conſtitution effectually ſecures the intereſts of the whole by prompting one ſet of men to ſeize on the public confidence by the temerity, the infignificance, or delinquency of another. The voice of the people rendering in this manner the patriotiſm of their friends triumphant, by confounding the machinations of their enemies, will always prove their beſt protection. But how the characters of ſuch as fill the ſuperior walks of life may affect inferiors, and operate on public decency, is an object peculiarly intereſting to all who have any ſincere regard for the laws of heaven or the laws of England. And it is not eaſy to make a conſcientious election among candidates for power, who are chiefly diſtinguiſhed by politics without morality, morality without religion, and religion without morality; who cover private profligacy by public pretenſion; and who ſubſtitute prudery for virtue; or reſolve all human and divine obligations into mere form or etiquette. What are all theſe but certain traits of the ſame low, unprincipled character? And ſurely he can be no patriot, however eminent and popular, whoſe abilities are proſtituted in fabricating apologies for obliquity, or who does not cheerfully forego a little of his own inclination for the benefit of others; no philoſopher, who aſſerts not the dignity of his nature at

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the expenſe of his paſſions; and no ſtateſman, in whoſe meaſures there is a general diffidence, of whoſe integrity there can be a doubt, whoſe principles are as pliable as his propenſities are unaccommodating. For all who have any ſettled opinion of the ſubject are agreed, that ſome degree of perſonal probity is ſtill neceſſary to public worth; that the beſt criterion of a good citizen conſiſts in diſcharging, with inviolable punctuality, all obligations to God and man; and that there can be no ſound conſtitutional policy where there is not the higheſt integrity and honour.

Such, my Lord, is the levity even of the Britiſh Senate, that a bare recital of theſe truths would probably either provoke the averſion, or convulſe with laughter the whole Houſe. The fact is, our beſt bleſſings ſeem no longer valuable in their eſtimation to whom the protection of them is intruſted. The few among us not aſhamed to live in the fear of God, and who have the hardihood to avow their convictions *in the face of the world's dread laugh*, becauſe their ſpeeches have generally a *tincture of religion in* them, are ſeldom heard with decency or patience. And what, my Lord, can the piety of that people be, in whoſe delegate capacity whatever relates to the great concerns of immortality is an object of ridicule! For no elocution is now in faſhion, or will be reliſhed, but ſuch as abounds with politcal ſpeculation, the pleaſantries of genius and wit, party invective, or perſonal ſarcaſm.

Indeed, my Lord, there ſeems no better way of reviving the obſolete virtues of our anceſtors, than by reſuming the good old practice of *going to church*. Were it poſſible to make this faſhionable in your Lordſhip's populous dioceſe, its effects would be palpable and univerſal. The example of the metropolis would pervade the whole kingdom; ſince, whatever mode predominates moſt in the centre uſually extends its influence to the extremities of the iſland. Bring this great ſpring to its former tone or temper, and every part of the machine will inſtantly recover its natural ſtrength and harmony: but while there is not a moment of our time more ſacred than another, and while every place, every purſuit, every avocation, and every, party is preferred to the houſe and the worſhip of the living God, like all people without religion, our manners muſt be groſs and turbulent; ſuperiors as regardleſs of decency as inferiors are of principle; the great vulgar and the ſmall not leſs prodigal of the preſent than if not connected with the future; public life a ſcene of proſtitution and venality; and even the hallowed ſhades of domeſtic tranquillity and friendſhip rarely exempted from the ferment of ambition, the rage of folly, or the taint of vice.

Your Lordſhip's inferior clergy are not the moſt likely inſtruments for accompliſhing this great work. Indeed a general revolution in the morals and religious ſentiments of men is an event

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ſo intereſting and momentous to all, as can hardly be expected from a few of the moſt inſignificant. In no part of the world is the ſacred and venerable function of the prieſthood ſo debaſed and irreputable as with us. Young men are eager to be employed, not where they can beſt correct the paſſions of others, but where they may indulge moſt ſecurely their own. Thus ſituated, in how many inſtances do not all the decencies and delicacies of the profeſſion ſuddenly yield to habits of diſſipation; and a youth of idleneſs, of levity, or of faſhionable extravagance, is ſeldom followed by any higher improvement than a profligate knowledge of the world, an acquaintance with all the reſources of diſeaſed appetite, the hacknied cant of libertiniſm, the artifices of hypocriſy, or the ſophiſtries of vice? Miſerable people! who have no better inſtructors than men of the loweſt manners and the looſeſt lives. Our own foibles tempt us to magnify and even triumph in the detection of theirs, and their utility ceaſes the moment their reputation is loſt. Few audiences are enlightened or poliſhed enough to diſcern or reliſh a compoſition of taſte, but all are ſufficiently aware that a teacher of religion ſhould himſelf be religious; and that worſhip can have no charms for the ſerious where the devotion is directed or led by a profligate, a rake, or a ſot.

Happy were it, my Lord, for the public, for the profeſſion, and for religion, that theſe abuſes originated only with a few wrong-

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headed individuals, who, by intereſt or intrigue, obtain holy orders without a regular education. In the moſt relaxed ſtate of diſcipline theſe extra-admiſſions are not frequent, and the circumſtances connected with them are generally ſuch as may be expected to operate more or leſs as a check on the worſt minds. You well know, my Lord, what licentiouſneſs prevails in our univerſities among youth of all ages and denominations. By *laying hands* on none but ſuch as are bred in one or either of theſe, your Lordſhip may poſſibly guard againſt an *illiterate*; but ſome other means muſt be adopted for preventing, what is yet worſe, an *immoral* clergy: and whatever theſe means are, your Lordſhip cannot more effectually promote the honour of your Maſter in heaven or the benefit of his friends on earth, do greater credit to the venerable ſtation you fill, or better acquit yourſelf to God and man, than by giving them an immediate trial.

Solicitude for the honour of a profeſſion, always in the higheſt repute in the pureſt times, and among the beſt men, fills me with abhorrence of ſuch individuals as thus degrade and vilify it in the eyes of the world. The clerical inſtitution conſtitutes a principal part of that form or mechaniſm which, with ſome correction in this, and other leſs material points, might certainly be more accommodated to general convenience and utility. Not to enter into the controverſy of abridging, curtailing, or reforming the *Liturgy*, may not

the time of the *Evening Service* be altered for the better? Surely an hour appropriated by cuſtom to bodily refreſhment is the moſt unfit that can be choſen for the public duties of devotion! Few ſervants, and no other of almoſt any family, can then attend; and all the remaining part of the Sabbath muſt be loſt, or, at beſt, but very improperly occupied. Is it not, my Lord, while the doors of almoſt every church in town are ſhut, that thoſe of conventicles are open, that ſectaries of every denomination multiply and gather ſtrength; that our excellent eſtabliſhment is undermined, deſerted, and betrayed; and that ſo many of the lower orders flock after preachers ſtigmatized by the name of Methodiſts, becauſe earneſt and faithful in diſcharging the duties of their ſtation, while a much greater number of their betters are infinitely worſe employed?

It is, my Lord, from a careful attention to the ſtate of religion in the metropolis, as it affects and faſhions the public mind, that theſe haſty and detached hints, thus looſely combined, are ſubmitted to your Lordſhip's conſideration. Their aim is of the moſt ſerious and general importance. They originate in no cynical, invidious, or plebeian motive; but in a ſincere conviction that, as the ſoul is more precious than the body, heaven more deſirable than earth, and eternity more momentous than time, the bleſſings of true religion proportionably tranſcend all others.

That

That the Spirit of Almighty God may give efficacy and ſucceſs to all your Lordſhip's miniſtrations; direct your talents and virtues to their beſt ends; and make your ſtation, your example, and your labours, what thoſe of all biſhops ſhould be—public bleſſings to thouſands, and *a crown of joy and rejoicing* to your Lordſhip *in the day of* Chriſt—is the ſincere prayer of

THE AUTHOR.

Abingdon-ſtreet, Weſtminſter,
March 20, 1789.

PRIVATE WORTH THE BASIS OF PUBLIC DECENCY;

OR,

AN ADDRESS TO PEOPLE OF FORTUNE.

EXAMPLE.

FROM the cynical aſperities of years, the envy of poverty, or profeſſional dogmatiſm, my readers have nothing to fear. It is the rich, the great, parents, heads of families, and all who have any ſhare of domeſtic authority, the liberal and civilized in every denomination of life, I am chiefly ſolicitous of addreſſing on this occaſion. With many of the moſt reſpectable among you it is often my happineſs to meet both in public and private in the liberal ſcenes of promiſcuous feſtivity, and in the more retired and tranquil circles of ſelected ſociety. Should any thing affecting, ſerious, or even ſevere, ſtrike you in what follows, impute it not to any mean paſſion or ſiniſter purpoſe, but to that familiar ſincerity and good-natured concern which is due from one neighbour, one acquaintance, or one friend, to another. For whatever foible may provoke my ridicule, or improprieties betray me into ſarcaſm, be aſſured the moſt unguarded or unaccommodating expreſſion that eſcapes me is intentionally kind, and comes from one of ourſelves, and one

too who urges nothing on his countrymen in which he is not ready and happy to ſet an example in his own conduct. He writes not for the vulgar or the vicious, and only wiſhes to make the beſt uſe in his power of that freedom which confidence in the liberal conſtruction of the candid and polite ſo naturally inſpires. All his hopes of ſucceſs are founded on the exertions of the good, who, from their number, their property, and their intereſt, have ſtill ſufficient influence, with a little prudence and attention, to faſhion or correct as they pleaſe the manners of others.

Impertinent, invidious, or diſguſting, as we generally deem the libels daily uttered againſt high life, or people of fortune, they are by no means ſo unreaſonable as many parts of our own conduct. Right and wrong are principles as ſtubborn in morals as facts are in nature. Selfiſhneſs, ſtupidity, or profligacy, may for a while confound, but can never altogether annihilate the diſtinction. And, in an age remarkable for nothing ſo much as the extinction of decency, the degradation of worth, and the dereliction of whatever was dear to our forefathers, the friends of religion and honour ſhould unite, and patronize whoever eſpouſes the ſame ſide, and makes a common cauſe of piety and virtue. It is ſurely the preſent intereſt of many, as well as the future intereſt of all, to wiſh the world better. Every advocate for reformation ſhould take advantage of this fact, oppoſe to the inſolence of open enmity the inſidious zeal of falſe friendſhip, and endeavour to give even the ſemblance the effect of reality, by conſidering thoſe not avowedly againſt religion as in ſincerity her friends.

Piety never did and never will thrive or become generally acceptable but under the ſanction of rank and faſhion. It is a moſt ſingular circumſtance that there never was a time or country on earth where the higheſt character in the community diſcovered more private virtue, and all the inferior orders of men practiſed it leſs, than

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with us. This curious contraſt between the manners of the public, and thoſe of the firſt magiſtrate, might ſuggeſt ſome very entertaining, and even uſeful ſpeculations. Kingdoms, like individuals, derive almoſt all their moral and beſt diſtinctions from the example of their ſovereigns; we ſhould for that reaſon be the moſt blameleſs as well as the happieſt people in the world. Our throne is literally eſtabliſhed in righteouſneſs; the decency, the dignity, the ſerioufneſs, and the ſanctity of the royal deportment are objects of univerſal admiration, and might well be expected to arreſt the imitation, or ſtimulate the emulation, of all. It ſeems equally ominous and unaccountable, both in a moral and political point of view, to ſee ſo many bad ſubjects under ſo good a prince, the worſt ſervants controlled and directed by the beſt maſter; the moſt pious reign debaſed by the groſſeſt vices; and the body politic conſtituting a monſter of immorality with a heart full of the nobleſt purpoſes; and hands always in miſchief, feet of the coarſeſt clay, and a head of the fineſt gold.

Into what ſhall we reſolve an abſurdity ſo obvious, ſo general, and ſo ſtriking, as muſt ſhock every ſerious and thinking mind both at home and abroad! You whom God hath diſtinguiſhed by fortune, rank, and influence, are but little aware of the ends for which theſe bleſſings are aſſigned you; of the duties reſulting from the ſituation in which you are placed; of the unſpeakable good which, as miniſters of divine Providence, you are capacitated to produce. It is by your means the royal virtues become a viſible image of the inviſible Majeſty of heaven, or that their influence purifies, refines, and exalts the various orders of ſociety, as the earth receives all its beauty and fertility from the ſun! You are the ſtandard-bearers of whatever is honourable, virtuous, or godlike, in human conduct; and the cauſe will proſper only in proportion to your ſincerity and fidelity. To you the whole kingdom of the righteous extend their

hands, and ſupplicate with ardent and affecting earneſtneſs the aid of your authority. You are placed in the world as Joſeph in the houſe of Potiphar; and your honour, like his, ſhould be equal to your truſt. All things are put into your hands and conſigned to your care; and it were the fouleſt treachery, as well as an inſtance of incorrigible folly, to abuſe the confidence of ſo indulgent a maſter. You are among others as mountains over vallies, and ſhould rather ſcreen them from the cold than ſeclude them from the heat. You are elevated on earth as cliffs above the ſea, and ſhould anſwer the purpoſe of watch-towers, not deſtructive rocks. You are friendly ſtars, whoſe office is to enlighten and direct, not malignant comets, to terrify or blaſt the regions below.

The perſon enabled by a race of illuſtrious anceſtors, by the gracious diſcriminations of ſovereignty, by the happy partiality of fortune, by the auſpices of high birth, or by the ſuperiority of tranſcendent talent, and not above the vulgar habits of immorality, muſt labour under a peculiar baſeneſs of nature, imperfection of intellect, or depravity of heart. Strength of mind, rectitude of principle, dignity, elevation, and ſublimity of ſentiment, ſeem the accidents and collaterals, if not the condition, of your ſtation. Do nothing unworthy the diſtinctions you enjoy, the hopes you indulge, or the homage you expect. You occupy a theatre which commands univerſal attention, and the animadverſion which haunts your conduct is as general as the envy which accompanies your ſituation. All eyes are upon whatever you do; all mouths are open to cenſure or applaud your actions, as they accord or diſcord with the characters you aſſume. Nothing is more natural to the principles you avow, the habits you cultivate, or the expectations you raiſe; gives your manners a more powerful influence on life, or becomes you better; than a conſciouſneſs of what you are, what you ſhould be, and what you may be. As therefore you would appear mutually pleaſing and reſpectable,

ſpectable, the objects of ſincere reciprocal approbation and well-grounded eſteem, revere equally the natures you ſhare and the advantages you inherit. By letting yourſelves down to the vices of inferiors you demoliſh the barrier which divides you from others, keeps them at a convenient diſtance, and renders them ſubſervient and obſequious to your views. In this manner the greateſt among you but too often reduce yourſelves to a level with the meaneſt, and expoſe the higher ranks of life to that deluge of impertinence and ribaldry which you may always expect where occaſion is given by the vicious, who relinquiſh their dignity as troubleſome, and the poor who regard your privileges as uſurped.

The few moments of leiſure, ſobriety, and recollection, which occaſionally muſt ſucceed the flutter of ceremony, feſtivity, dreſſing, gambling, and the ſtated rounds of faſhionable diſſipation, could hardly be better employed than by a ſerious review of your own actions, turning the edge of reflection on yourſelves, and conſidering coolly the terms on which you are placed above others. Your duties are as manifold as they are important; and the obligations which bind you to diſcharge them cannot be reſiſted without much criminality. Your frailties and imperfections derive a magnitude and importance from the liberalities of providence, and the endowments incident to theſe, which render them conſpicuous and remarkable. The changes which happen to an inferior planet occaſion no conſternation or conjecture; but an eclipſe of the ſun is an object of immediate and general attention. Whatever you do is marked with curioſity, and either provokes the execration, or commands the approbation, of the whole world.

A ſituation of rank or affluence may be conſidered as the great ordeal of human merit. Would you know what a man is, of what he is capable, or how he will act, inveſt him with greatneſs, make him rich, or give him power—He will inſtantly appear in his own proper character,

character, and wear a maſk no longer than he finds it neceſſary. It is when fluſhed with honours, and intoxicated with a high reputation, in the plenitude of wealth, and the ſplendour of proſperity, that he is known from others, or that his virtues or vices are correctly aſcertained. Who can tell how one born and bred among rags and cobwebs could acquit himſelf in imperial purple?—how humble he could be under every excitement to pride who is as ſoon in miſery as in being?—how abſtemious at a great feaſt he who never had a dinner but of herbs?—how temperate in commanding men whoſe reign has been hitherto confined to children. In a lowly and obſcure condition the nobleſt virtues are rarely found; yet their luſtre, like that of the ſetting ſun, never diſcovers ſo much beauty and magnificence as in a duſky horizon or through a medium tinged with clouds. Proſperity is a veil tiſſued with gold by the fingers of fortune to ſhroud or diſguiſe the uglineſs of vice; adverſity the public theatre on which virtue rears her offſpring, who feed themſelves with affliction as the ſun with ſalt water. *Poverty of Spirit* amidſt the greateſt abundance, *humility* overwhelmed by attendants and ſuperfluous equipage, *temperance* prompted to exceſs by every excitement which luxury can ſuggeſt, *moderation* in fortune without limits, or *power* without control, *compoſure* in ſcenes of general turbulance and commotion, *equanimity* in viciſſitude, *patience* in tribulation, and *good-nature* under all the provocations of malignity, are exertions both of the underſtanding and the heart, to which few are competent; which ſeldom happen but on great occaſions; which are never made but from the beſt principles and in the beſt hopes of that immortality which is their beſt reward. Individuals, who in this manner can do all they would, and yet do nothing but what is fit and right; who, in every inſtance, are above ſacrificing the preſent to the future; who ſuffer not their appetites to riot or flutter like butterflies amidſt that variety of ſen-

ſual objects which is moſt delicious and faſcinating to fleſh and blood, but reſtrain them within the bounds and enliſt them on the ſide of modeſty; who, like a celebrated prince of antiquity, can without exultation exchange a cottage for a palace, and handle the ſceptre with the ſame humility they held the plough; poſſeſs a virtue of which theſe degenerate times are no longer worthy, which they derive not from the example of the world, but the inſpiration of the Almighty; and which borrows no luſtre from pedigree or rank, but confers an inheritance and a *name better than* that of *ſons and daughters*.

The example of the great poſſeſſes a moſt powerful and prolific influence in the production of either good or evil, and makes mankind every where much better or much worſe. All their property, however immenſe, is but a gratuity, all their authority but a delegation, from God. Their habits of reſerve, their numberleſs aſſumptions, and their whole demeanour, are calculated to awe the multitude, and preſerve the eſtabliſhed reſpectability and dignity of rank. They are conſequently regarded by the vulgar as ſo many divinities, and with a ſpecies of homage and reverence that borders on idolatry. And the reaſoning by which moſt people reconcile themſelves to the follies and vices in faſhion would have no effect but for the ſceptical notions and looſe lives of the great. If men, ſay they, who know better and are not under the ſame neceſſity with us of burying their misfortunes in debauchery; of abandoning religion and decency for an indulgence which they cannot have but in their abſence; of cultivating habits of breaking the ſabbath and of deſpiſing the worſhip of God; of relinquiſhing all principle, and bidding defiance to all law, becauſe they cannot afford to be honeſt; are, notwithſtanding, guilty of theſe enormities, what can be expected from us who are bribed by every thing around us to do worſe, but have little or no aſſiſtance, either from our own or other's principles, to

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do better? Why ſhould they monopolize the wickedneſs as well as the wealth of the world? Their minds, better inſtructed, are abler to ſee through the manifold impoſtures, to detect the ſophiſtries, and to reſiſt the impetuoſity of paſſion, than ours. They have more at ſtake, muſt be greater loſers, and, from their education and habits in life, have a clearer and readier apprehenſion of their riſk than we, who err as much, perhaps as often, from ignorance as from depravity. We can hardly go wrong in following their ſteps, who are aware of the dangers to which the leaſt deviation on the right hand or the left muſt expoſe them. Why, therefore, may we not imitate them as they imitate others? They never can miſlead us but from wantonneſs alone, as they often enough do that without the leaſt temptation which we are ſo generally unable to avoid. Though it ſuited our inclination, we do not always find it convenient to be good. People of fortune have conſtantly the means of virtue in their power; the want of theſe in others but too frequently drives them into the arms of vice.

It is thus the multitude find an excuſe for their profligacy in that deference and homage which they owe their ſuperiors; and in which their payment is never ſo prompt as when with their beſt intereſts; that the progreſs of iniquity is accelerated and ſanctioned by their example who are beſt qualified to oppoſe it with ſucceſs; and that vice, having every where erected her triumphant ſtandard, and multiplied the trophies of her dominion and our diſhonour without end, dazzles and abuſes her votaries by the golden maſk under which her foulеſt ulcers are wrapped and concealed.

But a phantom, conjured up by the gay and faſhionable in modern times, aſſumes the dignified and hallowed name of honour, is ſubſtituted in the room of every thing holy and divine, and made the god of univerſal idolatry. In the world's vocabulary, or courtly dialect of the day, he is an honourable man whoſe debts of honour

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are punctually diſcharged, though at the expenſe of his tradeſmen, who is prodigal and profuſe in the purchaſe of pleaſure, and all alive to the inſtigations of revenge. So that this mighty principle, the ſupreme boaſt and diſtinction of an enlightened age, properly analyzed, conſiſts only in a violent attachment to the gaming-table, inordinate indulgence in all the purſuits of ſenſuality, and a ſavage propenſity for fighting: qualities which more virtuous times, which the beſt and greateſt men that ever lived, which ſound reaſon, which true religion, have all agreed to explode and ſtamp with infamy and contempt. Is it from the influence of a ſentiment like this we are to look for the manly but modeſt virtues of the Chriſtian life; thoſe tender ſenſibilities which give us an intereſt in the concerns of each other; thoſe condeſcenſions and humilities which render us the friends and benefactors, not the foes and diſturbers, of the ſpecies; all thoſe amiable and efficient ſympathies which impel us to ſhare our enjoyments with the unfortunate, the forlorn, or the miſerable? Indeed no ears are ſo deaf to the complaints of the wretched as theirs who are accuſtomed to inceſſant flattery, ſtunned by the altercation of gamblers, ſated by the noiſe of intemperance, or diſtracted by the buſtle and requiſitions of ceremony. The man of gaiety and diſſipation is a perfect churl in whatever does not contribute to his own immediate gratification. The vain man, though ſeldom among the firſt to explore the haunts of modeſt diſtreſs or abate the rigour of private misfortune, will endow an hoſpital, ſwell the liſt of any public charity, and grudge no expenſe to monopolize the plaudits of a moment. The man of faſhion ſpends all, and often more than he can ſpare, in decorating himſelf for ſhining in the circles he frequents; and is ſo engroſſed by company, compliment, punctilio, and perſonal admiration, that he has neither time nor heart to admit the claims of humanity.

Mark now the different effects of *that honour which cometh from God*, and which is the moſt valuable diſtinction of a reaſonable creature. Indeed there can be no true honour which does not reſult from the noble faculties God beſtows on man, or the diſintereſted actions man does for God. This, however depreciated and decried among men, is of the greateſt eſteem with Him who knows what we are, of what we are made, and what we can do. It does not conſiſt in high ſounding titles, which are only the *ſwelling words of man's vanity*; in large poſſeſſions, which ſo generally expoſe the owners; or in ſplendid equipage, which indicates at beſt pride or inſignificance; but in genuine humility and lowlineſs of mind, ſingleneſs of heart, purity of conſcience, a ſpotleſs reputation, and a good life. It delights in the performance of the kindeſt offices, not offices of unkindneſs; in condeſcenſion and complacency to all; not in haughtineſs, or a lofty inattention to any; in hiding or alleviating faults where they are, not in creating or aggravating them where they are not; in allowing the little excellence which ſtill may be found amidſt great imperfection, not in blazoning the imbecilities which always tarniſh the brighteſt virtues; in juſtifying even miſtakes when obviouſly well meant, not in eagerly cenſuring where there is any thing to commend; in quietly minding its own duty, not in officiouſly interfering or meddling with that of others; in healing, not in fomenting, animoſities; in being uſeful without noiſe, obliging without arrogance, and doing good for its own ſake; ſpurning every ſpecies of profit or applauſe not fairly acquired, and embracing all opportunities of exerciſing the virtues of humanity, beneficence, and ſelf-denial.

Infidels are no otherwiſe concerned in theſe remarks than as their principles are pernicious, in proportion as they become faſhionable. A few words may therefore be indulged on what conſtitutes

conſtitutes the chief obſtacle to that decency or pureneſs of living, which is the great object of this ADDRESS. Blaſphemers of religion, by their eagerneſs and aſſiduity to render their ſyſtem general, facilitate the introduction and progreſs of whatever is moſt inimical to perſonal probity and public decorum. The genius and induſtry daily proſtituted on this ſtale diſguſting topic might ſurely be more honourably as well as more profitably employed. Were you better acquainted with that true and venerable Chriſtianity which the writings of the evangeliſts and apoſtles exhibit in all its native purity and ſimplicity, but which you ignorantly and prematurely depreciate, you would ſee it ſo full of wiſdom, beauty, grace, and divinity, as muſt overwhelm your ſtrongeſt prejudices, preſs it upon your conſtant attention and practice, and attach your hearts to its intereſts, as the moſt admirable, uſeful, and heavenly doctrine ever the world enjoyed. We are taught to believe many of you men of eminent abilities, ſtrict morals, friends of mankind, and lovers of decency and order. Whence then your diſlike of an inſtitution, which, under the ſanction of divine authority, and the dread of *a judgment to come*, enjoins the cultivation and exerciſe of every virtue which can render men eaſy in their own minds, and a bleſſing to their fellow creatures; and which is alſo calculated to check, to criminate, and to puniſh, whatever has a tendency to mar the comfort or quiet of human life?

That the goſpel, while new, untried, and inimical to all the deep-rooted vices, errors, paſſions and prepoſſeſſions, which govern and debaſe the minds of men, ſhould meet with difficulty, contradiction, and enmities of all kinds, was no more than might have been expected from the nature of the caſe and the temper of the world. But now that it has been ſo long and ſo generally received, the propriety and utility of its rules, approved by the experience of ages, ſettled by legiſlative wiſdom and civil eſtabliſhments in all

enlightened nations, and rejected only by ignorance, barbariſm, bigotry, and idolatry; that it has been at iſſue and under diſcuſſion nearly two thouſand years, ſtood the ſevereſt ordeal of debate, admitted all the liberty its opponents could deſire, and heard and refuted every objection of the moſt eloquent and the moſt learned, both in ancient and modern times; that it has finally become an eſſential part of our boaſted conſtitution, and is ſecured by the beſt laws human ſagacity could deviſe, and even ſanctioned by the moſt ſolemn oaths, tendered in the moſt ſolemn manner to our princes and magiſtrates; might we not fondly and modeſtly preſume every tongue would be charmed into ſilence, and every pen ſuſpended from abuſing a ſyſtem thus wiſe in its direction, thus powerful in its influence, and thus manifeſtly conducive to univerſal felicity! One would imagine it altogether incredible a religion ſo harmleſs, ſo orderly, and ſo beneficial as this, ſhould find any enemies. Can the love of truth, zeal for the honour of God, concern for the happineſs of man, or even the ſtrongeſt ſelf-intereſt, give any rational account of your conduct who are? Why labour ſo eagerly for diſciples while it is ſo much your intereſt that all the reſt of mankind thought and believed otherwiſe? What have you to ſupply the place of the ſcheme you vilify and depreciate? Is it a dark impractical theory of what is called natural religion, and which ultimately comes to no more than that every man may be left to do what he pleaſes? Do ye ſeriouſly think this a competent proviſion and ſecurity for the peace and felicity of the world? Common ſenſe, and a prudent ſolicitude for preſent eaſe and convenience, ſhould diſpoſe you to let us alone in the calm enjoyment of a deluſion ſo pleaſing, ſo uſeful, and ſo indiſpenſable, to a rational ſupport and confidence under the various calamities of life, and all the fears of death; and to reſtrain the corrupt propenſities and unruly paſſions of men from unhinging government, ſpurning all authority

authority and laws human and divine; diſſolving all ties of ſubordination and dependency; embroiling equally every department of ſociety, and filling the whole world with violence, and uproar! How unreaſonable and impious the attempt to perſuade us againſt the conviction and practice of what combines our hopes and fears in our beſt intereſts; enjoins a worſhip of the divineſt ſimplicity; and enforces, by the nobleſt proſpects and motives, ſo chaſte, ſo commanding, and ſo holy a ſyſtem of the ſublimeſt and moſt perfect morality and piety! Every wiſe and good man, who wiſhes his own or his neighbour's welfare, muſt condemn you, and reſolve induſtry and zeal, thus ſtrangely miſapplied into a ſpecies of the moſt incorrigible obſtinacy or vanity, altogether culpable and incurable. It is a conſideration as terrible to you as comfortable to us who believe the goſpel, that we are ſafe in proportion to the riſk you hazard from its reality. Even ſuppoſing it to prove at laſt all falſehood and prieſtcraft, as you allege, we certainly loſe nothing worth keeping. We live more happily in this world than you do, from better hopes and more enlivening proſpects; our food is ſweeter, our ſleep ſounder, all nature more charming, and death leſs terrible. Nor can we be in a worſe ſituation than you, though there were not another. But, in the firm conviction of a future ſtate of rewards and puniſhments, how ſuperlatively preferable is our caſe to yours?

In one word, the arguments upon which we credit the goſpel revelation are ſo fair, ſo rational, and ſo concluſive; the miracles to which it appeals are ſo well atteſted, and in their nature and circumſtances ſo evident proofs of divine approbation; the morality it preſcribes is ſo juſt and excellent, ſo worthy of God and beneficial to man, beyond whatever was taught before; and the marks and characters of its heavenly original are ſo many, and all ſo palpable and unimpeachable, that our grateful ſubmiſſion to it as the

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grand ordination of heaven for the recovery and ſalvation of a loſt world, can never be imputed to us as a crime. God forbid this ſhould be your *condemnation—that light hath come into the world, and you have choſen darkneſs rather than light!*

Forgive this brief attention to a claſs of men who do honour to no rank of life, whoſe tenets are always in the way of the beſt advice, and who have no credit or conſequence from theſe but what are derived from the worſt paſſions of the human heart. Avoid their company as you would that of perſons infected by the plague; and regard their principles, however embelliſhed by wit, adorned by the graces of eloquence, or diſguiſed and made plauſible by the ſophiſtries of falſe reaſoning, as the elements of a ſcience, which would ſoon reduce ſociety to a chaos of miſery; which the worſt only practiſe againſt the beſt, and which is the fertile ſource of all the villany and guilt that daily outrage every human and divine reſtraint. Whatever they may think of our credulity, their ſcepticiſm muſt be wrong, becauſe derogatory to the beſt and deareſt privileges of our nature, and utterly incompatible with our welfare as men and citizens!

EDUCATION.

Much as has been ſaid on the religious education of youth, there is ſtill much to ſay. The ſubject deſerves peculiar importance from the intereſts all have in it. Our experience is the natural inheritance of our children: we have proved moſt of the enjoyments they purſue, been miſled by the various alluſions which miſlead them, found much vanity and vexation in what fills them with hope, and ſuffered extremely from thoſe viſionary delights which dance before them in the gayeſt proſpects, keep their little hearts in perpetual tumult, and ſwell their imaginations with joy. All

the compenſation we can make for the errors of our paſt lives, for loſt opportunities of doing good, for waſte of time, and proſtitution of talent, is to warn, with fidelity and earneſtneſs, ſuch as tread in our footſteps of the dangers to which they are expoſed, from the hoſtility of every thing around them; from the eagerneſs with which they are apt to graſp at the tremulous vapours of preſent indulgence; from the faſcination with which every ſpecies of vice ſolicits their riſing affections; and, moſt of all, from the levity, credulity, and treachery of their own hearts.

It is our duty and our glory to do all in our power that the intereſts of virtue, of human nature, and of God, ſhould be indemnified by poſterity for what they muſt have ſuffered from our negligence and imperfections. Should it not be the moſt ſerious concern of our hearts, and the conſtant ſtudy of our lives, that our children excel in all thoſe worthy qualities and good diſpoſitions of which nothing now remains among us but the name? It will then be our everlaſting conſolation, that, though virtue and all her heavenly aſſociates ſhould indignantly leave the world, we have not been wanting in our humble endeavours to conciliate her attachment, to retard or poſtpone her departure, and even to ſecure her a better reception with others than ſhe had from ourſelves.

There is not a more unaccountable circumſtance in the hiſtory of civil ſociety, than that experience, the moſt valuable and coſtly of all our acquiſitions, and univerſally deemed the beſt teacher and the beſt ſchool, ſhould, notwithſtanding, be ſo little conſulted in our uſual plans of education, and ſo ſeldom transferred by the old to the young. This among all inferior animals is the great law by which nature hath provided for a permanent and invariable ſucceſſion in the numerous inſtincts, habits, and ſpecific qualities, which diſtinguiſh her ſeveral tribes. And in no caſe whatever are the young once obſerved to deviate eſſentially from the characteriſtic diſ-

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poſitions of their parents. By the influence of ſimilar principles among men, the uſeful and liberal arts, literature, and the ſciences, are faithfully and correctly tranſmitted as a ſacred depoſit from father to ſon. The very errors of paſt generations in theſe reſpects become a fertile ſource of inſtruction and utility to poſterity. Morality, the nobleſt, beſt, and only immortal diſtinction of man, is ſecured by no ſuch eſtabliſhment. The qualities of the heart ſeldom keep pace with thoſe of the underſtanding. We are in general rather worſe than better from an increaſe of ſcience. Individuals, like nations, in this, as in moſt caſes, are commonly the more profligate, and the more ingenious in vice, the more they are enlightened. Thus the experience of age might be rendered of infinite benefit to the growing faculties of youth, and their excellence in performing the various duties of life made the neceſſary conſequence of our negligence or deficiency. The ordinary influence of bad example would then be reverſed, and we ſhould actually reform and improve in proportion to the wickedneſs unavoidably paſſing daily before us in the practice of thoſe about us, or in that of the world at large.

Our reflections will often and readily ſuggeſt to each of us thoſe peculiar appetites and paſſions which we are leaſt diſpoſed to reſiſt; what thoſe vicious inclinations and reſtleſs propenſities are to which we are moſt addicted; and, in our whole conduct, thus coolly and impartially inſpected, where the prevailing infirmity, foible, or defect of our reſpective character lies. Nothing can better direct us in what we owe as guardians of the riſing generation, as parents, as tutors, as truſtees for God and the world, to thoſe whom a kind Providence hath conſigned to our management, than a frequent and accurate review of ourſelves, the principles that regulate our temper, and the motives that form and govern our manners. It is from objects which have degraded our faculties, from tempt-

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ations which have ſubdued our integrity, from profeſſions which have abuſed our credulity, from ſentiments which have left us a prey to the machinations of perfidy, from books, companions, ſpectacles, and all the numerous things which tend to entangle or diſſipate, or pervert or depreciate, or impair, our rational and moral powers —— we are ſeverally and ſolemnly bound, by every tie, to detach and wean the tender partialities of youth.

Are we vain and giddy—the dupes and ſport of the moſt tranſient paſſions, without principle in our actions, propriety in our deportment, or ſtaidneſs in our attachments, opinions, or preferences? Do you ever ſee this very common character happy, contented, reſpectable, or often ſucceſsful; ſatisfied with itſelf, or generouſly contributing to the ſatisfacton of others? And ought we not, by all poſſible means, to correct or prevent ſuch a thoughtleſs perverſion and inquietude of temper in our offspring? Do we feel every day and every hour the pernicious conſequences of trifling with the quiet, the convenience, and the comfort, of each other; with the peace of our own minds, with that harmony or concord which conſtitutes the ſupreme felicity of earth and heaven? And can we ſuffer thoſe little ones, who are formed by what we are, and have no rules or directory but what they gather from our conduct and commands, to imbibe and cheriſh the ſeeds of a diſpoſition thus deſultory and diſtracting? Is an unruly, ill-ſorted, or diſorderly and turbulent ſtate of mind, at the bottom of almoſt every evil that betides humanity, the ſource of idleneſs and inſignificance, in ſuch as cannot apply either body or mind from the laſſitude that hangs about them, and the confuſion in which they are always involved; the eſſence of that procraſtination, or waſte of time, which reſults from inattention to arrangement, from miſplacing, miſtiming, and miſapplying, our reſpective duties and talents; the fertile origin of ſelf-condemnation and malevolent judgment,

prompting to injuries without provocation, and provocation without injury; treating matters of the higheſt and very laſt importance as of none, and giving to the mereſt trifles an air of the moſt ſerious conſequence; rendering irritable and irritating, and actually poiſoning or perverting the kindeſt intentions of Providence in all the bleſſings we either expect or enjoy! And does it not highly become us to inculcate on our children habits of the moſt ſerious conſiderations; ſolid and deliberate thought, a permanent predilection for order and regularity, punctuality in action, veracity and honour in all the interchanges of civility, and the moſt inflexible adherence to truth and nature in whatever they do or ſay? All that is hollow or hypocritical, or falſe or baſe, in public or private life, is the obvious and inevitable produce of this looſe, unthinking, frivolous, turn of mind. With whatever appendages of fortune, faſhion, gaiety, youth, beauty, or wit, we may ſometimes ſee it flaſhing in circles of diſſipation, haunts of gallantry, and places of promiſcuous reſort, feſtivity, or intrigue, it is an infallible badge of inſignificance, of folly, or of guilt. It wants the coolneſs of thought, the generoſity of ſentiment, the reſerve of decency, the attention of wiſdom, and the nerve of virtue. It has neither vigour, ſincerity, or reſolution. It conciliates this moment by kindneſs, and by unkindneſs kills the next. Its tranſitions from one extreme to another, like the variable temperature of our climate, are too ſudden to be acceptable, and too eager to be ſafe. It abounds to-day in all that can melt and charm the affections; is tender, open, fond, and accommodating; but to-morrow chills you to the heart by its diſtance, its cloſeneſs, its frigidity, or its averſion. And, after all, what can be expected from a mind for ever in a flutter or a ferment, alternately the victim of a levity which admits of no check, and paſſions that ſubmit to no control but peeviſhneſs of temper, inconſtancy of affection,

affection, a whimſical imagination, and an incorrigible heart? As, therefore, we regard our own duty and honour, our children's credit and comfort; the peace, reſpectability, and proſperity, of ſociety; and the welfare of millions yet unborn; let it be our daily buſineſs and habitual endeavour to moderate and correct their ſenſations and feelings, as well as improve their underſtandings, poliſh their manners, and direct their taſtes.

Is it our awful misfortune, with multitudes of our fellow-creatures, to be *carnally minded*, which, in the judgment of holy writ, *is death*, or ſo fatally engroſſed by the various objects of ſenſe, as to have little or no apprehenſion of ſpiritual and divine things! Surely the various inconveniences and miſeries, incident to ſuch a ſtate of darkneſs and uncertainty, are inconceivable and melancholy. Under this deplorable blindneſs of mind we can have no practical knowledge of the God of our lives, and the length of our days; of that Providence which protects us from every evil; of thoſe laws which it is our greateſt happineſs to keep, and our greateſt miſery to break; the gratitude we owe to his mercy, or the dread we ſhould entertain of his diſpleaſure. Without any ſolid proſpects beyond the preſent, all our hopes and fears, our acquiſitions and purſuits, are narrow, groveling, and temporary. The vanities and vices of this world unavoidably exhauſt the beſt faculties and anxieties of our natures, becauſe our intereſts, our deſires, and our hearts, are not in another. What advantage can we reap from the holy oracles of revelation, which armies of triumphant martyrs, in all ages, and which many of our own anceſtors, in one not very remote, valued more than life, while we regard them not as the records of truth, but as the fictions of impoſture? Which of us manifeſt any further concern for religion than her forms are in faſhion? And who does not ſee, with regret, that her exterior, even in theſe dregs of times, is ſtill indiſpenſable to

decency, though her power and ſpirit no longer exiſt! We live independent of her precepts; we acknowledge none of her energies; and we often die without any conſolation from her promiſes.

Moſt parents, however profane and diſſolute themſelves, as a proof of the ſincereſt diſſatisfaction with their own conduct, are yet ſolicitous to ſee their children religious. But a ſyſtem, which confers on ſinful and dying creatures all the privileges of holineſs and immortality, is not the muſhroom of a moment, or a diſtinction which may be caught, like the hues of the cameleon, from the proximity of every paſſing ſhade; or imbibed and retained with as much facility and correctneſs as an air of muſic by an elegant and ſuſceptible ear—No—It is an object which the underſtanding comprehends only by degrees; a cauſe which muſt have time to produce its proper effects; a principle which cannot put forth all its ſtrength at once; a habit which acquires maturity and influence by ſlow and gradual means. Endowments, thus valuable in their nature, thus rare and difficult of attainment, and thus eſſential both to the theory and practice of virtue, are, of all others, the moſt eligible for the purſuit and ſelection of young minds. Nor can their tender capacities be more happily exerciſed, or their growing years better laid out, than in cheriſhing impreſſions of his goodneſs and kind regards to whom they are indebted for all their enjoyments. Their ſenſes and affections, while keen and tenacious, ſhould be carefully and ſtrenuouſly detached from all thoſe gewgaws and illuſions which, amidſt the ſplendours around them, would render theſe impreſſions weak or momentary. Whereever they are, whatever they do, by whatever buſineſs or paſtime amuſed or occupied, their paſſions, preferences, and oddities, ſhould all be adapted to make them ſerious, to quaſh intemperance of mind, to ſuppreſs effervеſcence of paſſion, and to preſs upon their imaginations and hearts the awful realities of an inviſible world, their

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connexion with Providence and a judgment to come, and the infinite or endleſs intereſt which each of them has in futurity. What makes the lives of moſt men ſo deſtitute of principle, their intercourſe with others of fairneſs, their tranſactions of equity, their opinions of reaſon, their thoughts of eaſe, or their conſciences of peace, but the want of this pious and early culture? All that was ſerious or ſacred in their education has probably been no more than a little dull, dry, or dead, formality, which then took no effect, and has ſince been of no uſe. And that which is neglected in youth we generally find is rarely obtained without a miracle in years.

Who would not wiſh their offspring proſperous and reſpectable? and where ſhall the requiſites of ſuch ineſtimable acquiſitions be found but in early habits of piety, ſincerity, and truth? Inſpire them as ſoon as poſſible with a rational and hearty preference for theſe cardinal and divine virtues in all their native dignity, ſimplicity, and lovelineſs; and it will not be in the power of pride to inflame, of riches to inflate, or of pleaſure in all her blandiſhments to inveigle, ſeduce, or debaſe their affections.

Give their curioſity a proper direction, and check not that inquiſitive propenſity, which marks ſo emphatically the object of their earlieſt and beſt inclinations. It is the genius of riſing intelligence, ſpurning the fellowſhip of inferior natures, aſſerting its affinity with thoſe of an higher order, and ſighing for an intercourſe and ſociety more congenial and elevated. Encourage and cheriſh it with the ſame tenderneſs and intereſt you would the innocent and eager ſolicitude of a child bewildered among ſtrangers, and crying for the parent it loves and has loſt.

To young uniformed minds juſt opening on things around them the whole frame of nature appears one huge inexplicable maſs of deformity and incoherence. In their confuſed and feeble apprehenſions

ſions every proſpect abounds with objects, and every hour teems with events, which have no adequate, no viſible, cauſe. Excite and aſſiſt their developement of the great efficient principle or ſpring of whatever ſtrikes them in this profound myſterious ſcene. Thus relieved from the preſſure that overwhelms, and the palpable gloom which darkens and diſtracts their conceptions, they will be happy in proportion to the light you impart. This is the only ſpecies of knowledge which, more than all other ſciences put together, will improve their hearts and expand their faculties. It is a key which unlocks all the ſecrets of nature; and, by tracing every thing to one ſupreme intelligent Original, renders the whole ſyſtem at once rational and ſatisfactory.

Make them duly, and at all times, ſenſible, that the ſame gracious and bountiful Diſpoſer of all good, whoſe omnipotent word produced the heavens and the earth, and all their reſpective inhabitants; whoſe ſun refreſhes our ſpirits by his temperate and cheerful beams, warms, enlightens, and gladdens our dwellings; whoſe dews and rains impregnate the earth, and cauſe it to bring forth food for man and beaſt; whoſe is the day in which we work, the night in which we ſleep, the ground on which we tread, the air we breathe, the light we ſee, the winds which purify our atmoſphere, the waters which quench our thirſt, the fire which produces univerſal animation, and all the qualities of all the elements of things; who reſcued their feeble frames while ſtruggling on the verge of exiſtence from the darkneſs and debility in which nature encloſed them, and brought them forth in ſoundneſs and ſafety to the light of life; who preſerved them from being ſtrangled in the birth, or ſmothered in the cradle, deformed by the contingencies incident to a ſtate of immature organization, or marred in the harmony of either body or mind by the malignity of diſeaſe. His goodneſs ſaved them from multitudes of dangers, which without his kind

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paternal care muſt have cloſed their eyes as ſoon as they were open, and diſpatched them to another world the moment of their entrance into this. His arm protects them againſt all the ills and perils of unthinking infancy, nor once abandons their intereſt or their lives to the wayward footſteps of nonage and youth. It is from him they have their pleaſures, their neceſſaries, their conveniencies, their luxuries, and their all. Whatever they poſſeſs here, or hope for hereafter, is his. The plentiful table, the full cup, ſound health, an eaſy mind, the heart to reliſh, and the hand to diffuſe, the bounty that feeds them, are all equally and excluſively from him. His providence upholds them in all their goings, his grace ſupplies their wants, and his mercy pardons their infirmities. By his kindneſs they are kept in the land of the living; by his Son they are freed from the wrath to come; by his Spirit they are ſanctified and in his favour, which is better than life, all their nobleſt, beſt, and ſublimeſt, expectations, both in this and another world, ultimately terminate.

Notwithſtanding all the ſenſeleſs merriment and criminal ſarcaſm of licentious wit, the blaſphemy of ſcepticiſm, the faſcinating rage of impious example, and the raſh and ſtupid confidence ſo generally, ſo implicitly, and ſo madly put in the maxims of worldly wiſdom; a firm practical conviction of theſe important truths, in all their various connexions, aſſociations, and dependencies, is the ſole ſpring of whatever is truly great, honourable, and diſintereſted, in the nature and deportment of man. Bleſſed are thoſe children, on whoſe panting and ductile boſoms this holy, amiable, and lovely impreſs of ſupreme benignity and grace is faithfully and fairly delineated! Their beauty, improvements, and perfections, unlike the viſionary embelliſhments of faſhion, which levity and affectation laviſh on the body; which, having no end but ſhew, are tranſitory as unſubſtantial; and which, from the fever that prefers

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them, and the frenzy that they produce, are infallible ſymptoms of a diſeaſed mind; are intellectual and moral, pure in their nature, and in their effects certain, ſalutary, and permanent. Endowments thus precious and deſirable, conferred by reaſon, and ſanctioned by religion, will flouriſh in the paradiſe of God, when all that dazzles and deludes the graceleſs votaries of empty and oſtentatious gaiety expires. It is the qualities of the mind, the improvements of the underſtanding, the virtues of the heart, which conſtitute the primary objects of a manly and liberal tuition, which contribute to preſent excellence and future glory; which keep our paſſions moderate and our hopes alive; which alleviate the evils we feel by the anticipation of what we wiſh, and even ſubdue the fears of death by that immortality we have in view. Their luſtre will not only outſhine the *lilies of the field, with which Solomon in all his glory was not to be* compared, but actually ſurvive all that is pleaſing to the eye or the ear; all the charms of nature and all the creations of fancy.

Parents, guardians, governors, teachers, and all who have any concern, or take any intereſt, in the pleaſing but arduous taſk of raiſing, improving, and calling into life and action, the latent powers of our nature, are under ſtrong and peculiar obligations to ſeaſon all their inſtructions with religion. Were ſuch a tuition as this in faſhion, our youth would literally be like a well-watered garden. Give piety to their hearts, purity to their principles, and diſintereſtedneſs to their actions; and leave ſuperiority in every ſpecies of embelliſhment to ſuch as know no better and aim no higher. Excellence in theſe various, exalted, and rare, attainments, is a diſtinction ſo honourable and ſo ſubſtantial, as it were madneſs to expect from all the ornaments which letters, the ſciences, and even the graces combined, can confer. Indeed nothing we can teach or they can learn is of any conſequence when put in compe-

tition with the knowledge of God. Acquaint them, as ſoon as their minds are capable of information, with all the great Bible facts, and the plain eſſential doctrines of Chriſt and his apoſtles. Lay before them, in ſhort explicit and familiar terms, the radical principles and leading duties of the Chriſtian life; and, by every motive you can urge, rouſe them to an early practice, as well as a firm belief, of the goſpel. Repleniſh their young hearts, while yet ſoft and tender, unbiaſſed, unoccupied, and impreſſive, by truths of ſuperlative excellence, intereſts of the laſt conſequence, and principles of the beſt tendency. Fix their growing attentions habitually and earneſtly on the benign Sovereign of all worlds, as the Judge and witneſs of their whole behaviour, their merciful Governor, their kind Preſerver, their gracious Parent; as the God in whom they live and move, by whoſe power, and for whoſe pleaſure, they are both made and redeemed, as their beſt guardian, their beſt benefactor, and their beſt friend. Inſpire them with an habitual reverence and regard for every thing ſerious, divine, and ſacred, in thought, word, and deed. Reſtrain, by all the vigilance and circumſpection you can at any time command, their indulging, irregular, whimſical, affected, or worthleſs inclinations; and accuſtom them as much as poſſible, to the amiable habit of reſtraining themſelves. Remove from their obſervation, or place beyond their reach, whatever is moſt likely to pollute their hearts, anticipate their feelings, inflame their paſſions, or even vitiate and abaſe their taſte. Train them up in the knowledge, the preference, the love, and the practice, of all that is truly good, virtuous, and honourable, among men, under a permanent conviction of an awful reſponſibility at laſt, for the numerous advantages they enjoy, the faculties they poſſeſs, and the opportunities put in their power, of qualifying themſelves for the ſervice of God, of ſociety, and of one another.

Then ſhall you acquit yourſelves with fidelity to heaven, to your country, and to your own conſciences, of the truſt you have accepted. And the beneficent effects of obligations, thus ſacredly diſcharged, will ſpread far, ſtrike deep, and laſt long. The good qualities and worthy principles with which young minds are impregnated, conſtitute the beſt ſecurity for their faithful tranſmiſſion to future ages, and prove univerſal benefits to ſociety from generation to generation *while ſun and moon endure.* By the divine bleſſing on your pious endeavours, a ſolid foundation for this great and good work will however be laid, as the children whom Providence devolves on your care will come forth into the world ſhielded and armed in ſome degree againſt the contagion of vicious example, ſuperior to temptation, adequate to the duties, fit to make a proper uſe of the bleſſings, and not unprepared for the ſufferings, of life. And, long after your labours of love on earth are finiſhed to your own ſatisfaction, the rewards for having acted your part ſo well will be happily realized, your crowns will brighten, and your joys multiply in heaven!

FAMILY DEPORTMENT.

In the infancy of Chriſtianity it was decreed by Conſtantius the emperor, that all, who would not renounce the faith, ſhould be diveſted of their civil honours and employments. You may conceive the conſequence of ſuch a proclamation by what might be expected from a ſimilar one among ourſelves. The herd of mercenary paraſites, who preferred the enjoyments of the preſent to all the hopes of the future, was prodigious. A few there were, however, whom no threats could awe, no promiſes bribe, to relinquiſh that glory which crowns *a patient continuance in well-doing.* Having by this ſtratagem detected the impudent impoſtor from the real

real Chriſtian, the emperor publiſhed another edict, baniſhing all hypocrites from his dominions, on the wiſe allegation, that "they "could never be true to him who were falſe to God."

The maxim which ſuggeſted this expedient is quite as applicable to domeſtics as to ſubjects. Such as are accuſtomed to betray their Maker will hardly ſerve his creatures with more fidelity. It is upon the choice, the management, and the uſage of theſe, your patience and attention, who have the honour or hope to be maſters and houſeholders, is now ſolicited. An addreſs to you on ſo intereſting a ſubject is the more proper and likely to ſucceed, as you cannot but feel the inconvenience that occaſions it; as there are none of you who do not wiſh a redreſs in a grievance which has now become general; and as you are not only men, but Chriſtians, whoſe natures ſhould be refined, whoſe paſſions ſhould be regulated, whoſe hearts ſhould be enlarged, by the truths you believe and the hopes you indulge. Whatever the faſhion of the times, the power of bad habits, or the profligacy of looſe companions, may ſuggeſt, you cannot but be ſenſible and conſcious, whenever you think ſeriouſly on the matter, that you are all and ſeverally anſwerable to the great Maſter of the univerſe for your conduct to thoſe who, in all important reſpects, are your equals; who have the ſame feelings to conſult, and the ſame ſouls to be ſaved; and who, on the moſt intereſting conſiderations, are as dear to him as you can be.

It would ſeem, from every aſpect of ſociety, eſpecially in the metropolis and its environs, that houſekeepers, for the moſt part, are but little aware of the nature and extent of their duty to inferiors, what manifold advantages depend upon the faithful diſcharge of it, and the infinite and multifarious miſchief involved in its omiſſion. We are all ſenſible enough of their faults; of the nameleſs inconveniences and improprieties their inattention, care-

leſſneſs, or criminality, occaſions; of the vices to which moſt of them are addicted; and of the qualities we wiſh them to poſſeſs. Is it not in almoſt every family the common complaint, that they have no attachment, fidelity, or gratitude; that the ſingle principle, upon which they uniformly act, is a ſettled preference of their own intereſt, their own maxims, and even their own pleaſures, to yours; and that the only ſympathy, which unites and governs, and runs through the whole order, is never to forgive you either for your dependance or their ſuperiority.

Such is the flagitious ſyſtem upon which the preſent ſervitude of this country ſtands and erects a creſt equally ominous to private tranquillity and public decency. And they never had ſervants, or never conceived a correct idea of what they generally are, who can think of them more favourably, or give them, in ſtrict juſtice, a better character.

The conſequences of this glaring and alarming evil, properly eſtimated, will be found no trivial deduction from domeſtic felicity. They are felt, acknowledged, and deplored, by all; yet all have the remedy in their own hands. Would you know the cauſe, as the moſt probable means of preventing an effect you have ſo much reaſon to apprehend, trace your own vices to the vicious example of ſuperiors; and it is an inference, which cannot but ſtrike you, that whatever is moſt reprehenſible in your dependants or inferiors, can originate no where but with you. Bad ſervants ſeldom make bad maſters; but it generally happens that good ſervants degenerate under maſters not ſo good as themſelves.

Servants are ſo natural a part of the family that their manners form no indeciſive index of the management which prevails in it. Obſerve but the different reception of neceſſitous ſuitors at the doors of the affluent or noble. The civility or rudeneſs, humanity or cruelty, of the owner, is generally apparent enough to an intelligent

telligent eye in the face or demeanour of the porter. It is his maſter's feelings, rather than his own, which render him complaiſant or forbidding, affable or repulſive, accommodating or inſolent. He is ſeldom diſtant where his maſter is familiar, ſhy where he is frank, or contumelious to ſuch as have any ſhare in his condeſcenſion.

Servants are mere articles of equipage, and have as much attention paid their exterior as any other part of a ſplendid ſideboard or ſuperb furniture. The talleſt and beſt made are generally preferred; and moſt people heſitate at no expenſe to decorate and adorn them. The valet ſtruts in as full a ſuit, a head as well dreſſed, clothes as richly laced and ſcented, and a manner as ſtarch and lofty, as his lord. Her ladyſhip's maid at the ſame time flounces in volumes of drapery as ſumptuous, in ſilks of as great value, in trinkets as brilliant and as faſhionable, in perfumes as ſickly and profuſe, as any dutcheſs. All this exceſſive and ſuperlative finery is laviſhed on creatures as completely uninformed as the ſtocks of which Pagans carve their wooden gods, the wax or blocks which conſtitute the gewgaws of a toyſhop, or the boards of which publicans form their gilded ſign-poſts.

Even, when their *occupation* of paraſites and pimps *is over*, they ceaſe to be tools, but continue apes of their maſter's vices. Their luxuries are at an end, but the habits of ſlander acquired in the drawing-room, the blaſphemy imbibed in the hall, and the frauds witneſſed at the gaming-table, are by no means laid aſide with their liveries. Theſe are the acquiſitions which render the diſcarded domeſtics of great families ſuch a conſtant and powerful acceſſion to that alarming ſyſtem of knavery and depredation which the lower orders, eſpecially in the metropolis, carry on againſt all who are higher, richer, or better, than themſelves. It is principally in the kitchens and halls of theſe houſes, where no bounds

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are ſet to animal indulgence of any kind, that we perceive what monſters of inſignificance, lewdneſs, and depravity, high-living and little work make of ignorant and low minds. Theſe are the ſources which inceſſantly deluge the town with proſtitutes, our ſtreets with pickpockets, our highways with robbers and footpads, our priſons with felons, our gibbets and drops with malefactors.

Leſt our ſervants ſhould not be ſufficiently corrupted, and made uſeleſs and worthleſs by indulgence, we often debaſe ourſelves to a ſordid imitation not of what the beſt ſhould be, but of what the worſt are. That our men and women of faſhion ſhould be ambitious of appearing, both in dreſs and diverſion, jockies and Abigails, is not only mean and groſs, but a palpable demonſtration of their extreme folly who can ſtoop to a competition in which they muſt be worſted. There may be ſome humour, and even genius, in mimicking the abſurdities of a pampered menial in the manly exerciſes of the whip, managing a high-mettled courſer, or directing with ſkill the rapid evolutions of a carriage—but who does not pity the younger branches of thoſe families in which the maſter intrigues with the maids, and the miſtreſs with the footmen!

Nor does the caprice of faſhion promiſe any alteration for the better. What invention or improvement of late years in equipage or domeſtic economy has not facilitated the encroachment of our ſervants on our eaſe and indolence! "Our coaches are made "uneaſy, but light, that they may whirl us along with the utmoſt "rapidity for their own amuſement. Glaſſes before are laid aſide, "and we are immured in the dark, that the coachman may no "longer be under our inſpection, but be drunk or aſleep without "any obſervation: family liveries, becauſe badges of ſervility, which "might give information to whom their wearers belonged, and to "whom complaints might be addreſſed of their enormities, are laid "aſide. By their careleſſneſs and idleneſs they have obliged us to hire

" all our horſes; and ſo have got rid of the labour of looking after
" them. By their impoſitions on the road they have forced us
" into poſt-chaiſes, by which means they are at liberty to travel
" by themſelves, as it beſts ſuits their own eaſe and convenience.
" By their impertinence, which we have not patience to endure,
" nor reſolution to repreſs, they have reduced us to dumb waiters;
" that is, to wait upon ourſelves; by which means they have
" ſhaken off the trouble and condeſcenſion of attending us. By
" their profuſion and miſmanagement in houſekeeping they have
" compelled us to allow them board-wages, by which means they
" have obtained a conſtant excuſe to loiter at public houſes, and
" money in their pockets to ſquander there, in gaming, drunkenneſs,
" and extravagance. The laſt of theſe is an evil of ſo gigantic a
" ſize, ſo conducive to the univerſal corruption of the lower part
" of this nation, and ſo entirely deſtructive of all family order,
" decency, and economy, that it well deſerves the conſideration
" of a legiſlature, who are not themſelves under the influence of
" their ſervants, and can pay them their wages without any in-
" convenience."

Such are ſome of the various ways by which the depravity of ſervants has of late become ſo prevalent and portentous in this country. What a difference would a little more circumſpection in our own conduct produce in theirs. Blame not them till conſcious that you are yourſelves blameleſs. Walk before them in the paths of uprightneſs. Never appear in their ſight but as the friends and admirers of whatever is fair and honourable. Exhibit no qualities at home, or in your families, which would make you bluſh abroad or out of them. Keep all your ſtrongeſt feelings and paſſions as much as poſſible under the guidance and control of decency and propriety. Make all the allowance for theirs you would reaſonably wiſh for your own. Excuſe and forgive their infirmities in

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perfect confidence of the divine aſſurance, that, in proportion as you forgive others, you will yourſelves be forgiven. In every tranſaction, more eſpecially with ſervants, maintain the moſt inviolable regard for truth. Be temperate in your pleaſures, honourable in your dealings, ſacred in keeping your word; not raſh in making, never guilty in breaking, a promiſe; ſlow to anger, apt to forgive, cool in action, collected in difficulty, reſigned in affliction; not frothy, proud, or volatile, in proſperity; not melancholy in adverſity; not curious to deſcry faults where they are not, or to aggravate them where they are; cheerful without levity, polite without art, and affable without meanneſs. Servants, impreſſed and controlled by a carriage thus comely and conſiſtent, will ſoon either love or leave you, relinquiſh your family, or reform their own conduct, avoid the view of a goodneſs that muſt confound them, or mend their manners by an imitation of yours.

Great, inceſſant, and univerſal, has been the clamour for a new police. A rage for novelty, like other paſſions, often tranſports men beyond the bounds of moderation, and ſometimes renders them tired of the beſt inſtitutions. From the reduction of felony to a ſyſtem, the daring and numerous depredations every where made upon property, the precarious ſecurity we enjoy even in our own habitations, the multitudes conſtantly dragged to juſtice as ſheep to the ſlaughter, and the horrid traffic ſanctioned by a ſemblance of legality that is made of human innocence and human life; magiſtracy is ſunk into contempt for its lethargy, religion for its gravity, and law for its impotence. Let but maſters, heads of families, houſekeepers, parents, tutors, and all who are armed by nature, by God, or by man, with any ſpecies of authority or influence, exert it conſcientiouſly and impartially, and the duty of magiſtrates will be made eaſy, the laws recover their wonted energy and empire; and even religion, degraded and neglected as

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ſhe long has been, exert her uſeful and benign tendency, ſend forth *her healing virtues through the land*, and diffuſe among all ranks juſt principles, ſound morals, comfort within doors, and decency without.

Such is the miſerable condition of our ſpecies that the many are univerſally condemned to perpetual labour for the better accommodation of the few. Our exigencies multiply as our circumſtances improve; and moſt people, in any degree of affluence, require as much attendance and nurſing as infants or invalids all their days. For the etiquette of living in ſtyle is to be waited upon by thoſe who are too lazy and too proud, and have too much time to wait upon themſelves, to do as little as poſſible for ourſelves, and nothing at all for others.

Servants are not merely a neceſſary appendage to poliſhed life, but a ſource of the greateſt convenience we enjoy. Without them how many of us were a burthen to ourſelves, and to all whoſe happineſs makes us happy! Our wants, our luxuries, and our whims, render them indiſpenſable. They give us their time, their health, and their ſtrength; and often miniſter to our eaſe and pleaſure at the expenſe of their own. Their ſituation, ſo near our perſons, ſo eſſential in our arrangements, puts us at all times much in their power, by inducing us to treat them with a certain degree of confidence, by making them ſtationary witneſſes of our frailties, and by impreſſing them with a belief of our dependence for moſt indulgencies on their aſſiduity. When at the greateſt diſtance from relations and friends, their attachment, aſſiſtance, and condolence, are always at hand, and often peculiarly ſoothing and acceptable; for emergencies there are, in the moſt fortunate and tranquil lives, which render the care and attention of faithful domeſtics one of our beſt bleſſings. Are we not conſequently bound, by all the ties of gratitude, to repay, in the moſt liberal manner we can, theſe inva-

luable obligations? It is our duty, and it ought to be our practice and our pride, to make them better, by our ſervice, in proportion as it is the means of making us happier. Do they not ſave us much trouble by ſupplying our wants? And may we not prevent them a world of miſery by enlightening their minds, and improving their hearts? It were madneſs to form any connexion with ſuch as we dare not truſt; yet in this precarious and diſtreſſing predicament our perſons and properties are inevitably placed while our ſervants are unprincipled and uninformed. How many inſtances are inceſſantly occurring, in the worthieſt families, of prodigality and treachery, where fidelity and honour alone were expected! Is it not a fact, equally notorious and alarming, that moſt burglaries, which ſtain the calendars of public juſtice, are occaſioned by a blind precipitant confidence in ſervants who have no care, no conſcience, and, often enough, no character?

Who is not aware how much good ſervants improve moſt of our domeſtic conveniences, what we ſuffer for the want of them, how ſeldom they are found, and with what difficulty kept? No wonder a circumſtance, thus auſpicious to the comfort of families, ſhould be an object of ſuch eager and general ſolicitude. It leſſens almoſt every ſpecies of care which preſſes hardeſt on a feeling mind; gives facility and effect to all the regulations of economy; and is one of thoſe ſprings on which moſt depends in the various evolutions of domeſtic mechaniſm. Then every one performs their reſpective duty, and is accommodated by the beſt of all earthly bleſſings, heart's eaſe; mutual confidence produces its uſual complacency and good-humour; all the ſocial virtues revive and diffuſe the feelings, the ſmiles, and the graces of kindneſs, innocence, and affability; and the harmony of candour and ſincerity triumphs in the abſence of envy, jealouſy, ſuſpicion, and all their ſiniſter and baſe aſſociates. What a mortifying characteriſtic of our common nature, that,

that, with happineſs always at hand and at home, we ſtruggle ſo much, and go ſo far, to be miſerable!

Who would not wiſh ſo happy a revolution extended beyond the narrow limits of a family, and that the whole world were thus bleſſed! And there cannot certainly be a better expedient for effecting a general reformation than by correcting the lives and mending the manners of individuals. Surely mankind would be both wiſer and happier were the majority of them more tractable and virtuous! But the fountain cannot be pure while the ſprings that ſupply it are muddy. Dependants in this populous and poliſhed place, including journeymen, apprentices, day-labourers, menials, and domeſtics of every deſcription, conſtitute at leaſt two thirds of the whole inhabitants. What have we not to dread from the profligacy of ſo prodigious a multitude, to whom nothing comes amiſs but their duty; nothing is infamous but what keeps them out of place; nothing criminal but what cannot be concealed or ſubjects them to puniſhment? Whence but from this fertile ſource of miſchief feuds and animoſities among neighbours; frequent depredations in families; the memorable riots which but a few years ago had almoſt involved the whole town in one awful conflagration; and what, perhaps, is more than any other mortal calamity, the ſhocking depravity of the riſing generation? Theſe, and innumerable diſorders and enormities of a leſs obvious but ſtill more odious deſcription, are all unavoidable conſequences of maſters without principle and families without diſcipline.

The benefit, both public and private, which the fidelity and worth of ſo large a body of people would infallibly occaſion, infinitely exceeds our moſt ſanguine expectations. It would be ſuch an acceſſion to the general ſtock of virtue as muſt equally produce ſecurity at home and reſpectability abroad. The object, in whatever light you view it, is at leaſt of magnitude enough to ſanction, to excite,

and to intereſt your warmeſt endeavours. It is not only ſnatching firebrands from the hands of madmen and thoſe on whom, under Heaven, the preſervation even of your lives and properties depends; but, by providing for an immediate and abſolute renunciation of all your own vices, the beſt means of eſtabliſhing the moſt ſubſtantial happineſs both here and hereafter.

How then ſhall we command ſo eminent an advantage to ſociety, to families, and to individuals? That wantonneſs of ſpeculation, which affects and abuſes whatever intereſts the human heart, riots with more than uſual licentiouſneſs on this ſubject. Extravagant lenity or indulgence to ſervants is only not ſo odious and unpopular as extreme ſeverity. The effects of both, however, are nearly the ſame. You may well debaſe yourſelves to their level, but can ſeldom or never raiſe them to yours. Their minds are as uncultivated, and may as eaſily and as ſoon be ruined by pampering, as thoſe of children. They will take liberties in proportion as you ſlacken the reins of government; and no fury is more unmanageable, no rage more dangerous, than vulgarity, ignorance, and affectation, intoxicated or run mad. Every thing and every creature are wrong and wretched, uſeleſs, and even miſchievous, out of place. There is no ſpecies of hypocriſy more cruel or pernicious in common life than the mere cant of humanity. And in this, eſpecially, it is now the faſhion, more than ever, where there is the leaſt of the ſubſtance to make the greateſt ſhew, and to compenſate for the deſtitution of virtue by the moſt hyperbolical pretenſions.

There are, however, many degrees between too much humanity and none. Among the ancients maſters were inveſted with the power of corporeal correction over all their dependants. This odious and abſurd authority can never be revived, or even deſired, among us, but at the dreadful expenſe both of juſtice and of decency.

cency. To make ſervants good, it is not neceſſary that maſters ſhould be either tyrants or monſters: and ſurely it is with little probability he can expect to retain any degree of control over the paſſions of others who indulges his own to exceſs.

Well were it for ſociety, and for all men, that every one could be king, prieſt, and prophet, among his own domeſtics. Moſt are ready enough to claim the honour and privileges of the firſt character, but few are equally careful to diſcharge the obligations of the other two. Why do we not recollect that the indignities done to the honour and authority of God in our families, while we endeavour not to reclaim ſuch as are under our inſpection, will be juſtly imputed to our negligence, and the iniquities of our houſes may be viſited upon ourſelves! Did you ſee a blind man ſauntering about the brink of a precipice, and gave him no warning; or though within reach of a perſon ſwept down by a torrent, and afforded him no relief; or while preſent at an eruption of fire, and alarmed notthe neighbourhood; — not all theſe inſtances of criminal negligence, either ſeverally or combined, were half ſo barbarous as inattention to ſervants both in principles and morals. A few moments, at moſt, would put an end to the ſufferings of the former, and the haſty proceſs of ſuch accidents leaves no time to work upon our feelings; but the miſeries of the latter are without meaſure and without end. They are conſigned to your care and tuition by his ſovereign appointment to whom you are reſponſible for their degeneracy or improvement. From the omiſſion of what is your duty, perhaps by the influence of your example, they may often enough be ruined. And it is a conſideration immaterial indeed to them, but to you of infinite moment, that the ruin of maſters is frequently involved in that of ſervants.

Your duty, whatever the faſhion may be, is, by all you can do or ſay, by advice, by authority, and by example, to acquaint and impreſs

impreſs your ſervants with theirs. All that fortune has put in your power cannot enable you to ſerve them more eſſentially than by attaching them more firmly to their ſtations, and qualifying them to fill them better. The head of a family, thus diſtinguiſhed by manlineſs of deportment and holineſs of life, is actually the friend, the guide, the comforter, of the whole. They ſee and are ſtruck with what their conduct ſhould be, from a conſtant obſervation of his. He exhibits daily the moſt valuable, the moſt uſeful, and the moſt charming, of all domeſtic pictures—a lively tranſcript of true worth, enlivened with traits of cheerful piety, genuine honour, and innocent gaiety. It is a family piece; and though, with a very few illuſtrious exceptions, ſeldom found in the galleries of the great or the cabinets of the curious, often gives beauty and charms to the homelieſt cottage: and the family who has it not, however rich, ſplendid, powerful, or reſpected, had better be without fortune or friends, or honours, and even *ſell all to buy this pearl of great price*. Bad ſervants will either be awed and repulſed, or allured and amended, by the preſence of ſo much goodneſs. His buſineſs is never ſlighted, as the diligence of his ſervants is eſſentially rewarded by the ſhare they have in his confidence. His indulgence is never abuſed, as they know it will never be impaired while they do their duty. His commands are never evaded, as he does by them in every thing as he would have them do by him. Under him they feel no authority but reaſon; act from no motive but love; apprehend no puniſhment but the conſequences of their own folly. He makes it a point of honour to embrace every opportunity of preſſing on their attentive and deliberate conſideration all thoſe arguments and truths which tend to enlighten their underſtandings, moderate their paſſions, reconcile them to a dependent condition, and make them in love with an honeſt conduct and a fair reputation. He directs their wills by the hopes and fears of religion, and keeps

keeps their conſciences awake and tender by its ſanctions. He fortifies them againſt the corrupt and vicious maxims which they imbibe from each other, and demonſtrates, both in word and deed, that morality is generally worthleſs in proportion as it is pliable; and that the principles of human conduct are never ſo firm, ſo pure, ſo elevated, as when moſt unaccommodating. Folly and knavery are unſtable and temporary; but truth and goodneſs, like their Divine Author, never change and never die. The virtuous habits he thus inculcates and diſcloſes in all the relations of life excite their livelieſt emulation; enlarge, improve, and captivate their hearts. They live with him, under him, and for his intereſt, on terms of reciprocal reſpect and cordiality. *His yoke*, like that of his heavenly Maſter, *is eaſy and his burthen is light.* How pleaſing! how profitable! But, alas! how very rare muſt that ſervice be which is founded in his kindneſs for them and their gratitude to him. It is by this omnipotent law, this ſupreme energy in the heart of man, they find themſelves impelled to do every thing they can for him and his, whoſe bread they eat, whoſe wages they receive, and whoſe patronage they enjoy. Is it any wonder they feel and avow a ſerious and habitual intereſt in all his concerns! His will is the great rule of their lives; and they are happy and bleſſed in the pleaſure he takes in their welfare, the honour of his approbation, and the benefit of his example.

For the reverſe of this eminent and engaging character we can all but too eaſily conſult the original. It may ſtrike the leſs that we ſee it ſo ſeldom, and we not unfrequently like thoſe things beſt with which we are moſt familiar. We complain loudly, generally, and perhaps juſtly, that we are ill ſerved; that ſome ſervants are fraudulent, perfidious, and diſhoneſt; others inſolent; many idle; and almoſt all careleſs, ſelfiſh, and worthleſs. But does not the very nature of the evil point out the remedy? By what means are they

ſo abandoned? Is it not that their education, their habits, their lives, which are often but a ſervile tranſcript of yours, have not a ſhade of holineſs in them; that they are without the common maxims and reſources of integrity and candour; that they have no other proſpect or hope than what depends upon the preſent; and that they derive no expectations or motives, or comforts, from a ſpiritual or future world? And is it by ſuch weapons as theſe they can baffle the temptations to be encountered in a ſtate of ſervitude? Alas! what afflictions ſo light, what pains ſo eaſy, what drudgeries ſo trivial, as under theſe circumſtances may not feel exceſſive and intolerable! But once convince them that the great and terrible God ſees all their actions, and ſearches out the thoughts and intentions of their hearts; that no covering can hide, no place detach them from his preſence or his ſight; and that he is the conſtant witneſs of whatever they do or wherever they go; make them ſenſible how much they depend upon his providence for health and ſtrength; what ſatisfaction reſults from a ſteadfaſt confidence in his mercy; how little they can do without his aid: inſpire them with a ſtrong and practical belief of the divine government; impreſs their hearts with a conſtant apprehenſion of the world to come, and the peculiar obligations of duty and of gratitude they are under both to earth and heaven; lay before them the evidence, and explain the nature, of the goſpel; intereſt them in its bleſſings, and reconcile them to its conditions; give them a principle of faith and holineſs — and they will be the ſame out of your ſight as under your eye; deem themſelves accountable to God for their conduct to you; make no exceptions in relinquiſhing all their own pleaſures and preferences for yours; and, inſtead of preſuming to ſelect only what duties are moſt eaſy or beſt ſuited to their convenienience and inclination, do the leaſt as well as the greateſt from the ſingle impulſe of ſincerity and conſcience. The

The moment they are real Chriſtians you will have faithful ſervants, and the public good and quiet ſubjects.

Without theſe qualifications, ſound and ſeaſonable inſtruction, good company, and a perfect pattern of what they ſhould be, it would be madneſs to expect them other than they are. Perhaps they ſeldom hear of God or religion but in the ribaldry of a frothy or wanton converſation; are here corrupted by the looſe lives, and there debauched by the libertine principles, of their betters; in one place made accomplices in fraud, in another emiſſaries of intrigue, in a third the vehicles of ſlander or malignity, and almoſt every where meet with an awful, unaccountable, and epidemical contempt for ſpiritual and eternal things. When the obſerve ſo many, who they juſtly conſider muſt know better than themſelves, habitually abſent from every place of worſhip; when ſome grudge them but a few hours to do homage to the great Father of all; when others ridicule religion in their preſence, and convince them by their conduct that they neither believe its truths nor honour its inſtitutions; and when almoſt all leave them in groſs ignorance of the goſpel, without God, and without Chriſt, faithleſs, hopeleſs, and graceleſs, deprived of whatever keeps the affections pure, the paſſions cool, the conſcience tender, and a ſenſe of duty alive in the heart; it would be one of the greateſt miracles ever the world ſaw to find them better! We owe it to the providence of heaven, to the reſtraining grace of God, to his unſeen but powerful protection, who *keeps us in the hollow of his hand*, that they are not worſe, that your confidence is not more ſignally abuſed, and that their extreme profligacy does not combine and tempt them to ſome general outrage. Every inſtance of imprudence, of irreligion, of indecency, or of want of principle in you, is the more impreſſive and infectious, that it is always before their eyes, that it is enforced by the reverence due to ſtation and authority, that it is

gradually copied with a view to conciliate your affections by a conformity to your ſentiments and manners, and that it acquires facility and vigour from an inclination prevalent in all ranks to emulate their ſuperiors. It is by ſeeing you affront your Maſter in heaven, in ſlighting his mercies, diſhonouring his name, deſpiſing his inſtitutions, and ſpurning his laws, that encourage them to be inſolent to their maſters on earth. Becauſe you proſtitute the ſabbath, they miſ-ſpend the week. Becauſe you are intemperate, they go into every *exceſs of riot*. Becauſe you defraud others, they ſteal from you. Becauſe your conduct is without honour, they are perfidious. The ſlander, obſcenity, and blaſphemy, which rage in the dining-room, are vented in the kitchen. There, and every where, they tranſcribe your foibles and vices with fidelity; and, though they ſerve you as baſely as they can, diſhonour you not half ſo much as you do the *God of your lives and the length of your days.*

GRATITUDE.

Let me now conclude this ADDRESS by an earneſt appeal to the feelings of parents, heads of families, and people of rank and fortune, on the chief ſcope and ſum of all that has been urged. *If you* are *made*, as the poet ſpeaks, *of penetrable ſtuff*; if bad company, bad example, and bad habits, have not already depraved you beyond recovery; if you have any warmth in your natures, any generoſity in your hearts, any fire in your paſſions, it will be impoſſible to think or reaſon ſeriouſly on your peculiar intereſt and ſhare in the bounties and benevolences of Heaven, and not acquit yourſelves with the gratitude of ſincere Chriſtians, of good men, and of uſeful citizens.

PARENTS!

PARENTS! How many tender anxieties, endearing relations, and intereſting diſtinctions, meet in this honourable appellation! It is elegantly ſaid, that "celibacy, like a flie in the heart of an apple, "dwells in ſweetneſs, but dwells alone; is in habitual confine- "ment, and dies, as it lived, in ſadneſs and ſolitude; but that divine "inſtitution which ſanctifies the paternal character, like the uſeful "bee, builds a houſe and gathers honey from every flower; and "labours and unites into bodies and empires; and ſends out colo- "nies, and feeds the ſpecies with delicacies; enacts laws, maintains "order, exerciſes many virtues, and promotes many intereſts; and is, "upon the whole, that ſtate of good things to which God hath de- "ſigned the preſent conſtitution of the world." Parents occupy in the body politic functions ſomewhat ſimilar to thoſe of the heart in the animal ſyſtem. All that life and motion, and vigour, which give circulation to the fluids, pulſation to the arteries, and tone to the nerves, originate with this primary organ of ſenſation. And there is certainly nothing deſirable or tranſcendent among the numerous comforts and privileges of ſocial life, which you, who are parents, are not one way or other the means of conferring. What ſoils are to plants, roots to trees, or fountains to ſtreams, you are, by the bleſſing of God, to the world. In fact, it is you who ſupport, repleniſh, and keep it alive. It hangs upon you, as literally as the fruit does upon its parent ſtock, for ſap and nouriſhment; and without conſtant ſupplies, derived from you, the whole race would languiſh and inſenſibly diminiſh, like the produce of thoſe boughs which are blighted, or which prematurely wither and decay. All the numerous and affecting breaches which diſeaſe, or time, or the grave, repeatedly makes in families and ſocieties, it is your diſtinguiſhed province to repair. And ſoon would the happieſt and beſt revolutions be effected in every nation on earth, were theſe liberal and ſtated acceſſions to the general ſtock of population properly qualified for diſcharging the duty of worthy citizens.

Thus important and reſpectable is the ſtation of parents in all political aſſociations. They are the direct channels of every advantage population effects; the great origin of all the honours and dignities which individuals arrogate or enjoy from the preference, the partiality, the juſtice, or the intereſt, of one another; the firſt link in that immenſe and complicated chain which involves all the various relations of civilized life, and knits the ſpecies together. Their capacity in the great ſcale of being may conſequently be ſtyled the mother of the world, as it creates families, preſerves kingdoms, fills cities and churches, peoples both earth and heaven, and might, by the influence of good example, prove an infallible introduction to private happineſs and public utility. The man who could raiſe but one blade of graſs where there is none, has been wiſely eſteemed a more liberal benefactor to mankind than the conqueror of nations, or the ruler, who is often enough the tyrant and ſcourge of empires. And whoever has the good fortune of adding to that ſociety, where Providence hath ordered his lot, but one uſeful member or worthy citizen, confers on his country and the ſpecies an obligation which the produce of no capacity, however ſuperlative, no property, however immenſe, no rank, however elevated, can equal.

One of the moſt celebrated princes of all antiquity congratulates the parents of a numerous progeny in ſtrains of peculiar energy and juſtneſs. *Children*, ſays he, *are an heritage of the Lord, and the fruit of the womb is his reward. As arrows are in the hands of a mighty man, ſo are children of the youth. Happy is the man who hath his quiver full of them. They ſhall not be aſhamed, but ſubdue his enemies in the gate.* He attributes children entirely to the gift of God, and pronounces thoſe happieſt who have moſt. He deems every child an acceſſion to the conſequence, the ſafety, and the proſperity of all; and eſtimates the merit of parents by the number

and

and worth of their offspring. What is a family but a group of friends united in one indiſſoluble league, not by the common bands of expedient or neceſſity, but by the great law of nature—a tie paramont to all the inventions of art, and more impulſive and permanent than even the inſtincts of ſociety!

Many, indeed, and various are the cares and inquietudes which multiply with our offspring; but theſe are the cares and inquietudes not of avarice or ambition, but of nature and of love. And, though they do keep our tendereſt ſenſibilities always awake, and often produce a momentary vexation, they are never accompanied either by the tear of repentance or the pang of remorſe. Virtuous induſtry wonderfully mitigates their ſeverity; Providence is ſeldom wanting where parents are neither prodigal in ſpending nor remiſs in acquiring the means of ſubſiſtence; and children are never ſo difficult to bring up in the beſt as in the worſt habits, under a moral and religious as under a looſe and undiſciplined tuition. It is in the power of but few, who have large families, to provide for their luxuries and their vices, but all may promote the improvement of their hearts; and, though they cannot give them fortunes, may give them what is better—active habits and good principles. And ſurely no ſucceſs in life can yield any ſatisfaction ſo ſubſtantial, ſo laſting, or ſo grateful, to all the feelings and views of a good mind, as the conſciouſneſs, in whatever we do for them, of having uniformly preferred the cultivation of thoſe qualities which conſtitute the happineſs, perfection, and immortality of their natures.

Some of the moſt illuſtrious nations, in ages of unexampled ſcience and celebrity, inveſted parents with a ſpecies of deſpotiſm over their reſpective families. It was chiefly by regulating the exerciſe of paternal authority that they preſerved the ſimplicity of their laws, kept their numerous houſeholds in order, and provided for

for internal peace and ſuch an unanimity as is the broadeſt and firmeſt baſis of general felicity. They ſecured a ſucceſſion of good citizens by making good ſons, and thought it unlikely that he ſhould command well abroad who knew not how to obey at home.

It is recorded of an Aſiatic father, that he brought one of his ſons fettered to the famous Artaxerxes, ſoliciting that the prince would forth with command him to be ſlain. The king aſked, with ſupriſe, whether he could find in his heart to ſee his ſon put to death? 'In my garden,' ſaid the father, 'grows a beautiful lattice, 'healthy, wanton, and full of leaves. When any of theſe acquire 'ſuch a ſtrength and luxuriance as proves injurious to the reſt, my 'duty impels me to make a ſacrifice of one to the welfare of the 'whole; and the moment it is gone they begin to thrive. This, 'O king! is an emblem of my family. The boy, in theſe igno-'minious ſhackles, is ſo ill an example to his brothers that his life 'may render them the worſt, but his death the beſt, ſubjects in all 'your majeſty's dominions.'

Such was the patriotiſm of antiquity!—ſtern, but diſintereſted; cruel in its means, but merciful in its ends; above the weakneſs, but alive to all the beſt movements of the human heart; cultivating private only as conducive to public good; and ſhrinking from no evil, however near, or exquiſite, or great, which promiſed the production of general utility. Diveſt this venerable and potent energy of its original ferocity; inſtead of the gloomy ſuperſtition of Paganiſm inſpire and ſanction its operations by the glorious principles of divine revelation; and, reſcuing its hopes from the doubts and deceptions of a viſionary philoſophy, build them on the promiſes of the goſpel; and you will find it an infallible antidote to that general diſſoluteneſs of manners which is the opprobrium of the times. You will then tend the gradual developement of your children's minds, the expanſion of their hearts, and the direction of their paſſions,

paſſions, with an anxiety not neglectful of the preſent, but provident of the future. Your houſes will be ſeminaries of what the public moſt wants in her ſervants—ſound heads and true hearts; and the more virtuous individuals you make, the more good you will do. By multiplying ſecurities for the reputation of others, you will raiſe and eſtabliſh your own. You will furniſh better, truſtier, and hardier, ſubjects than either the laws or the manners of the country. You will become the beſt repreſentatives of God upon earth; who, though he might command our love by his bounty, attaches our natures ſtill more ſtrongly to his ſervice by the motives of hope and of fear. You will eaſe the magiſtrate of his cares and fatigues; prevent the frauds and unravel the ſophiſtries of law; thin our priſons and courts of juſtice; tear up the ſyſtem of modern profligacy by the roots; reſcue our highways, thoroughfares, places of the greateſt and genteeleſt reſort, our ſtreets, and our houſes, from the depredations of villany; diſperſe or extirpate the enemies of public decorum, and put an effectual end to every ſpecies of profeſſional delinquency, faſhionable enormity, venality of principle, or proſtitution of talent; and all the various impoſitions which haraſs and alarm every walk of life. It is from you—ye parents, tutors, guardians, and directors of the riſing generation; fathers, mothers, guides, benefactors, and friends of whatever is tendereſt and deareſt to the human heart; who, animated and warmed by the genius of your commiſſion as delegates of God in the cauſe of innocence and heaven, inſpired by all the gratitude you owe for the poſſeſſion of bleſſings nameleſs, numberleſs, and invaluable; and appropriating honourably and conſcientiouſly the powers you hold in truſt—that your country, and the world at large, expect enlightened magiſtrates, upright ſtateſmen, patriotic ſenators, intrepid ſoldiers, good fathers, good huſbands, good brothers, good friends, diſintereſted citizens, and honeſt men!

MASTERS! Pauſe but a moment on the meaning of this word, and it will ſtrike you, however callous, or haughty, or ſelf-conceited, to the heart!—One who controls and is himſelf uncontrolled, who commands others and is himſelf free, who is waited upon at his call, but himſelf waits upon none, who is more or leſs independent in proportion to the number dependent upon him! And what claim or pretenſion has the beſt on earth to rights or endowments not of his own acquiſition, to be other or higher, more rich, more honourable, or more powerful, than his fellows, to ſuch a palpable ſuperiority over creatures made of the ſame duſt, animated by the ſame ſpirit, furniſhed with the ſame organs, and capable of the ſame improvements, that he is? Obſerve the beaſts of the field, the fowls of the air, and the fiſh of the ſea; none of them uſurp the rights of another, but in conſequence of greater ſtrength, more agility, or a better addreſs. Independent of theſe diſtinctions, is not all the pre-eminence you poſſeſs, however deſcended or allied, proſperous in trade, or fortunate in any of the numerous contingencies of life, ſuch an inſtance of ſovereignty, or of grace, as challenges the prompteſt, the ſincereſt, the moſt permanent practical acknowledgments? Can the maſter of a family, a village, a city, a kingdom, or the whole world, aſcribe his elevation or his dignity to any other cauſe than his righteous and wiſe ordination *by whom kings reign and princes decree judgment, and who doth according to his will among the armies of heaven and the inhabitants of the earth!* But for the gracious diſpoſal of his kind providence, the moſt independent might have been flung among ſavages, and waſted a miſerable exiſtence in bondage, obſcurity, or barbariſm; the wealthieſt pined in indigence, the proudeſt grovelled in ignominy, and the higheſt and greateſt ranked with the loweſt and the leaſt! From theſe evils you are exempted and ſhielded; but it is in that boſom where the lambs are carried and the ravens are fed! Yours are the genial

dews

dews of heaven, the ſunſhine, the morning, the cheerful ſpring and the fruitful ſummer; theirs the pinching froſt and thickening ſhade, the black night, the autumn ſtripped of its fulneſs, and the winter big with miſery and miſchief, who with equal natures perhaps and better hearts are deſtined to a harder fate! And what do you give in return for ſuch a multitude of favours? Are you better or holier than ſuch as languiſh in want, while your *lot has fallen in pleaſant places, and you have a goodly heritage!* Hath God raiſed you to his favour, to a ſtate of independence, to ſhare with him in the government of the world; and is it not your duty to act for him, to prefer his ſervice, to promote his honour, to benefit his creatures?

No language, you well know, can be more natural, amiable, or winning, than that of gratitude for benefits received. It is the chaſte and genuine emanation of a thankful and a full heart, warm and overflowing with acknowledgment from the recent and ſtrong impreſſion of undeſerved and unexpected obligation! All nature is regular in nothing ſo much as in tendering this juſt tribute of homage to him who made her. What is the primary object of all her operations but the glory of her Maker! — and how otherwiſe can ſhe fulfil her intentions than by that mutual advantage which her ſeveral productions derive from each other? To this hour the heavens roll their everlaſting rounds in the moſt perfect concord! In all the diverſified motions of the ſpheres not one ever interrupts another. The whole luminous aſſemblage of ſtars, which ſhine with diſtant but magnificent luſtre, conſpire to promote the good, the harmony, the grandeur, and the perfection of the univerſe. Which of the elements do not ſweetly communicate among themſelves the qualities they receive from heaven? The air gives to the earth of its light, its wind, and its rain; the ſea impregnates the air with vapour; and both afford plants and animals whatever

is neceſſary for growth and nouriſhment. The very viciſſitudes of the ſeaſons are occaſioned and preſerved by a ſpecies of ſilent but mutual conceſſion. Thus winter gives place to the ſpring, the ſpring to ſummer, and ſummer to autumn. There is conſequently a perpetual ſucceſſion of day and night, of light and darkneſs, of calm and ſtorm, of wet and dry, of hot and cold. It is in this generous commerce which relieves, aſſimilates, and unites, the various parts of nature, that her beauty, utility, and harmony, conſiſts. Interrupt this general concord of things, and the whole ſyſtem will become disjointed and revert to its original chaos. Gratitude alone conſtitutes this divine union, and union is the ſoul of the univerſe, the ornament of heaven and earth, the life, the joy, the glory of both worlds! The maſter who feels not what he owes to the Power who admitted him to a participation of that authority which rules over all, who emancipated him from ſervitude, or who placed him above it, is an exemption from the ſtanding laws of nature, and a monſter in the right eſtimation both of reaſon and religion. The only acknowledgment you can make for benefits thus great, precious, and peculiar, is by acting to the beſt of your capacity an honourable part, and leading a life both at home and abroad of exemplary worth. The gratuities of a good Providence will then have their natural effect, by promoting at once the preſent and future good of thoſe immediately beneath you, about you, and under your eye.

There has ſeldom been a time more favourable to the practice of virtue under theſe circumſtances. Among the vulgar it were vain to ſend you for inſtances of worth. The beſt things in them you are not anxious to emulate. Precedents from high life, even in the groſſeſt abſurdities, are adopted implicitly and unexceptionably. And you cannot, but with the worſt grace imaginable, decline imitating your betters in actions of the greateſt conſequence, whoſe

manners

manners are ſo powerful a law in thoſe of the leaſt. Many are the illuſtrious characters in the higheſt orders of ſociety, whoſe opinions and lives might well be expected to have the beſt influence on yours. Do not the amiable and good diſpoſitions, the regularity, the condeſcenſion, and, above all, the piety of the ſupreme magiſtrate, merit your love and imitation? Why does not his purity of conduct, his religious ſentiments, his attachment to the public worſhip of God, diſgrace or put to the bluſh every ſpecies of libertiniſm in principle and practice? From the poliſhed courtier to the clown or the peaſant, all mimic the virtues and vices of ſuperiors. What is there ſo unreaſonable, ſo impious, or ſo monſtrous, that faſhion will not introduce and ſanction? While the monarch is the model of the court, and the court of the nation, the manners of a good or a bad king muſt be the greateſt bleſſing or the greateſt curſe. It is one of the proudeſt diſtinctions of our age and country that we live under a prince as good as he is great, as illuſtrious in virtue as he is exalted in place, and as ſuperior in all the moralities of the heart and all the decencies of life as he is in wealth, dominion, and domeſtic felicity, to all the potentates in Europe! Who does not concur in the wiſh that qualities ſo dear and uſeful to ſociety were exempted from the common frailties of humanity. But ſuch is the condition of our being, that the beſt appointments on earth have no preſcription againſt diſeaſe even to men of beſt abilities and beſt diſpoſitions. And that we may not look upon crowns and ſceptres but the tempeſt of cares in which they are always involved; that every motion of envy may die within us as we view the ſplendour and luxury of ſuperiors; that we may feel the inſignificance and tranſitory nature of whatever charms and faſcinates our ſenſes; that all may be ſtruck dumb with conſcious ingratitude for poſſeſſing unimproved, unacknowledged, and often ill employed, that reaſon which is the life of God in the ſoul of man; has not the firſt among

us in conſequence, and the moſt conſpicuous in worth, been reduced to a ſtate of mind peculiarly awful and humiliating? Into what conſternation and ſorrow was not the whole kingdom plunged by the perſonal calamity of the Sovereign? It was felt like the ſhock of an earthquake when the foundations of the world are convulſed, and with the ſame mournful deſpondency that ſeizes a family abruptly bereft of its head and protector; an army whoſe officers or leaders are ſuddenly cut off; or paſſengers in a veſſel deprived of its pilot in the very hour of imminent and inevitable danger.

Thanks be to God his Majeſty recovers, and our hopes revive; his reaſon returns, and our confidence is reſtored; he reigns, and we are happy! An event the more gracious and acceptable that all expectations of it ſeemed to fail in proportion as it was ſolicited with eagerneſs, ſincerity, and unanimity. Who does not rejoice that theſe melancholy interruptions to a health, on which ſo many intereſts and felicities depend, are thus happily removed, and that an example ſo important and becoming may yet continue to adorn the throne of theſe realms, and ſhed a moſt benign influence among a loyal and grateful people for many a year to come? Long may theſe nations be *bleſſed in him!* And long may their unity, their allegiance, and their proſperity, make him *bleſſed!* Surely we owe it to the grace of God, *who lifteth up one and caſteth down another*, that we had full poſſeſſion of all our comforts while he was thus fearfully bereft of his; and to that omnipotent arm, which preſerves the univerſe from ruins, that we are not ſeverally abandoned to all the horrors of inſanity! Let the reaſon ſpared to us be virtuouſly employed, that the proſtitution of the nobleſt gift of God render us not ultimately inexcuſeable: for, if it does not make us grateful and good, by impreſſing our hearts with a high ſenſe of its value, it will certainly make us wretched, by inceſſantly putting us in mind how little we deſerve it. And however

we

we abuſe faculties thus capable of immortality, uncultivated, as they often remain, by the giddy and thoughtleſs; wherever we may fly to avoid the reflexions they ſuggeſt; little as they are occupied in making us *wiſe unto ſalvation*; and much as it is the faſhion to diſcredit their religious application; the period preſſes upon every one of us when we muſt account for their exerciſe and improvement, and wiſh from the bottom of our hearts we had rated them higher and uſed them better.

PEOPLE OF RANK AND FORTUNE, whether *parents*, *maſters*, or *individuals*, are deeply concerned in the purport and iſſue of this argument. The propriety of being firſt in worth, as firſt in place, requires neither proof nor illuſtration. Your ſoundeſt monitor, on a queſtion ſo intereſting, will be your own hearts, whoſe advice is always at hand; whoſe language is always plain; and who can be under no temptation to miſlead or abuſe your credulity. Whatever you are, or have, or hope, ſhould impel you to act for God, for the ſpecies, and for your own ſafety.

The orignal equality of mankind is a fact which you cannot diſpute, which you cannot forget, which you cannot recollect, without a mixture of wonder and gratitude! Our birth, our death, and many intermediate ſcenes of life, reduce both great and ſmall to the ſame mortifying level. Whence then the palpable and prevailing diſparity of our ſeveral conditions? Make a juſt eſtimate of each man's lot, by conſidering maturely all the circumſtances of his fortune, and many differ not more from the animals beneath them than one man does from another! There are ſome who ſalute the firſt dawnings of a miſerable deſtiny under all the horrors of the groſſeſt vaſſalage, while you are free-born, nurſed in the boſom of refinement, dandled in the lap of proſperity, and charmed, from the moment you open your eyes on the world, by the richeſt

proſpects;

proſpects its honours, its pleaſures, or its profits, can diſcloſe or command! Others, depreſſed by a feeble intellect or imperfect organs, carry nothing but maladies and deformities about them from the cradle to the grave. Should not this ſtamp a value upon thoſe comely proportions which diſtinguiſh many of you from the crooked and diſeaſed? Does it not endear the GIVER of them in your eſteem? A preſent of the leaſt article in dreſs, that might ſuit your taſte, would excite your gratitude. And is nothing due to him for health ſo perfect, and forms ſo fair? Do you not derive from his bounty theſe exterior beauties and graces, that you may be in love only with that ſpiritual and immortal being, who, ſpurning the periſhable purſuits of organized duſt and aſhes, bears the impreſſion of God, participates of his nature, and aſpires to his confidence? Why endowed with a genius capable of graſping all ſcience, a ſound judgment, a faithful memory, a rich imagination, and all the faireſt faculties of a liberal and poliſhed mind? Do not multitudes come into the world with bodies as handſome, and parts as promiſing, who are, notwithſtanding, abandoned to want and obſcurity; whoſe underſtandings, enveloped in ignorance and error, are abſolutely precluded from whatever leads to duty or to happineſs? What numbers of rational creatures have no diſtinctions from others but misfortunes; nothing of their own but afflictions; no patrimony but ſin and miſery! This baniſhes from their minds every gleam of comfort; makes them feed upon gall and wormwood all day long; and drenches their evenings and their mornings in tears. And do not at the ſame time, not only men and beaſts, but all the elements of things, under the auſpices of indulgent Heaven, miniſter to your convenience, ſwell your magnificence, and heighten your felicity? Look at the foot of the great wheel of life, as it runs its awful and myſterious round!—what ſhoals of helpleſs creatures are daily grinded by oppreſſion, mangled by adverſity, bowed down

with ſorrow, or overwhelmed by deſpair; while you enjoy yourſelves, and loll at eaſe on the top as on a couch of roſes, and ride triumphant on the high places of the earth, reſpected by equals, adored by inferiors, feared by enemies, and careſſed by friends!

There is not a ſpot on the whole face of the globe more friendly and congenial to goodneſs than this. It is a ſtorehouſe of divine bounty, a paradiſe of pleaſure, a glorious pavilion, which *your God* and the *God of your fathers* furniſhes and ſpreads forth for accommodating you and yours. Other countries may excel it in a multitude of local, interior, and proximate advantages: they may enjoy milder climates, ſerener ſkies, more luxuriant ſoils; perhaps have leſs perfidious and dangerous enemies: but our inſular ſituation, military character, public ſpirit, commercial genius, extenſive dependencies, vaſt revenues, maritime ſuperiority, equitable laws, free government, and religious liberty, render the Britiſh empire at once the envy, the miſtreſs, and the wonder of the world!

The immunities of our civil, political, and ſacred eſtabliſhments, tranſcend all the wiſeſt and the beſt inſtitutions of the kind in ancient and modern times. The period in our hiſtory which gave form, ſtability, and operation, to theſe, has been * recently commemorated in a ſtyle peculiarly auſpicious to public proſperity. The ſeveral feſtivities, adopted for a purpoſe thus honourable and important, were marked by ſome of the happieſt circumſtances. Little or none of that unmanly virulence, which ſtamps with obliquy the factious but impotent efforts of party rage, ſullied the patriotic effuſions of that joyful occaſion. And the impreſſion reſulting from the glad recollection of an event ſo great, ſo intereſting, and ſo memorable, united and called forth many of the beſt minds from all the moſt elevated ranks of life, from ſome of the moſt

* The 4th and 5th of November laſt.

faſhionable

faſhionable circles, and even from ſocieties the moſt adverſe in political opinion, in one generous and pious ebullition of gratitude to heaven for mercies which none but Britons enjoy, which none but the God of nations could beſtow.

Theſe every Briton feels and reveres who knows the ſituation of his fellow-creatures in countries leſs free. In what other nation, or among what other people, do individuals poſſeſs ſo much independence, or realize ſuch abſolute ſecurity from every ſpecies of outrage? We have what liberty we pleaſe, on the ſole condition of not interfering with that of others; we dare to live, and act, and ſpeak like men; and theſe immunities, the gifts of indulgent Providence, and preſerved by the ſtruggles of a brave anceſtry, are not the boons of a deſpot, but the birthright of Engliſhmen; not ours by ſufferance but inheritance; not optional but unalienable. Our laws are regulations of common choice, not edicts of prerogative; the guardians of freemen, not the ſcourges of ſlaves; an aſylum for the weak from the injuries of the ſtrong, not an engine in the hands of a few for bending the necks of the many! Every man's houſe is his fortreſs, where none dare moleſt him but at their peril. We ſit at our own fire-ſide, aſſociate with our families, reliſh the ſweets of domeſtic felicity, and reſign ourſelves to reſt and retirement without anxiety or apprehenſion. Whatever property we acquire or inherit is our own, and at our own diſpoſal. We have no maſter and no ſervant but by fair contract; and in the loweſt as well as the higheſt ſituation are on a level with all, as all are ſubject with us to one legiſlature. We owe no obedience and yield none but to the aggregate voice of the community. No ſtatute can be enacted, no taxes raiſed, no meaſures adopted, till our conſent by our delegates in parliament is obtained. What are magiſtrates but the ſervants of the public, elected and rewarded for doing the public buſineſs, and never likely to govern ſo well

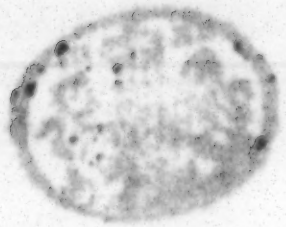
as in the confidence of being governed by the public. We know no power but what is under legal control; are always entitled to confront our accuſers; and, in circumſtances of the greateſt delinquency, can demand an open trial by a jury of our peers. Thus our perſonal ſafety, our liberty, our property, our rights of private judgement, and all the ſolemn prerogatives of conſcience, make part of that eſtabliſhment which, in the Britiſh conſtitution, combines the liberality of an enlightened people with the wiſdom and experience of ages. Surely, *Happy is that people that is in ſuch a caſe; yea, happy is that people whoſe God is the Lord!*

THERE are local advantages involved in our circumſtances which few other nations can boaſt. Our mountains teem with flocks and herds; our vallies are loaded with variety of the beſt corn; and our orchards, gardens, and even hedges, abound with all kinds of the healthieſt and moſt uſeful fruit. No hurricanes or tornadoes tear up the labour and hopes of our huſbandmen, mangle the plantations of the field, or involve both man and beaſt in the ruin of their habitations! No earthquakes raging around and beneath our feet wrap the buſy multitude in horror, and threaten to bury the living among the dead! No volcanos, preying on the entrails of our mountains, impregnate our atmoſphere with electrical vapour, or deluge our plains with liquid fire! No prowling monſters, from the pathleſs deſert or the unfrequented foreſt, infeſt our dwellings or our haunts, prevent our rural excurſions, or ſcare our ſocial intercourſe. We ſeldom hear the craſh of battles, the ſhouts of the victor, or the groans of the wounded; and never ſee the warrior in *garments rolled in blood!* Famine thins not our ſtreets; the demon of civil diſcord is at reſt; and the peſtilence, awful meſſenger of fate! rides no where through the land *on the pale horſe of death.* Plenty and peace, miniſters of preſent proſperity and

harbingers of good things to come! are ſeen in all ſhapes and all places hand in hand, gladdening all faces by their preſence, ſmiling and bleſſing a happy people! While religion, in all her purity, divinity and holineſs, is cheriſhed, protected, exemplified, and careſſed, as the guardian of virtue, the guide of life, and the bond of ſociety!

Thus Britain, like a well cultivated garden, is enriched by the choiceſt productions of nature, and happily clad and decorated in every ſeaſon of the year by the lovelieſt and ſweeteſt verdure. Our peaſants are all free men, our commoners their own law-givers, our nobles princes, our houſes palaces, our villages towns, our cities marts of commerce and treaſuries of wealth; and our whole iſland, happily ſituated at a convenient diſtance from the troubles and intrigues of a reſtleſs and hoſtile continent, appears the pride and glory of the whole earth! Even that rude unmanageable element, which once overwhelmed the world, hath the Moſt High God appointed us *for walls and bulwarks!*

Ye, who more or leſs are raiſed above others, conſtitute the principal figure in this intereſting picture; and the peculiar excellence or deformity with which you ſtrike the eyes of all beholders muſt ſenſibly brighten or obſcure the whole. Put the caſe, that any of your moſt confidential domeſtics repaid your indulgence with treachery, dealt perfidiouſly with your intereſt, embezzled your property, connived with your enemies, corrupted your ſervants or ſeduced your children! Has language any term ſufficiently harſh or ſignificant for a conduct ſo flagitious? And what better can yours be deemed whom all the indulgence of exalted ſtation, enormous wealth, or extraordinary parts, only make worſe! Are you not placed in ſociety under circumſtances palpably impreſſed by the partiality and confidence of heaven? Your privileges cannot

be overlooked while memory retains her powers, or one good impulſe warms your hearts; nor once ſeriouſly called to mind without an immediate ſurrender of yourſelves to his ſervice who conferred them. Whoever can lead vicious lives under the ſenſe of ſo many obligations to virtue, or reſiſt the influence of the beſt examples, all the good things of this world, and all the hopes of another, degrade the ſpheres they fill, and proſtitute the natures they ſhare! however great, opulent, or reſpectable in others eyes or their own, the part they act is diſhonourable, becauſe ungrateful; unmanly, becauſe unjuſt; low, becauſe falſe; and vulgar, becauſe baſe. Thus highly favoured by nature, by God, and by ſociety, they are like nothing within the boundaries of creation ſo much as the waſte howling wilderneſs, which returns the genial warmth, and rains, and dews of heaven; with briars, and thiſtles, and thorns, parched promontories, bleak winds, and clouds of duſt; barren trees in the moſt fruitful vallies; poiſonous herbs, in the gayeſt parterres; venomous inſects in the healthieſt ſprings; waſps among plants which feed the induſtrious bee with honey; or neſts of deadly vermin covered by cluſters of the ſweeteſt flowers!

THE END.